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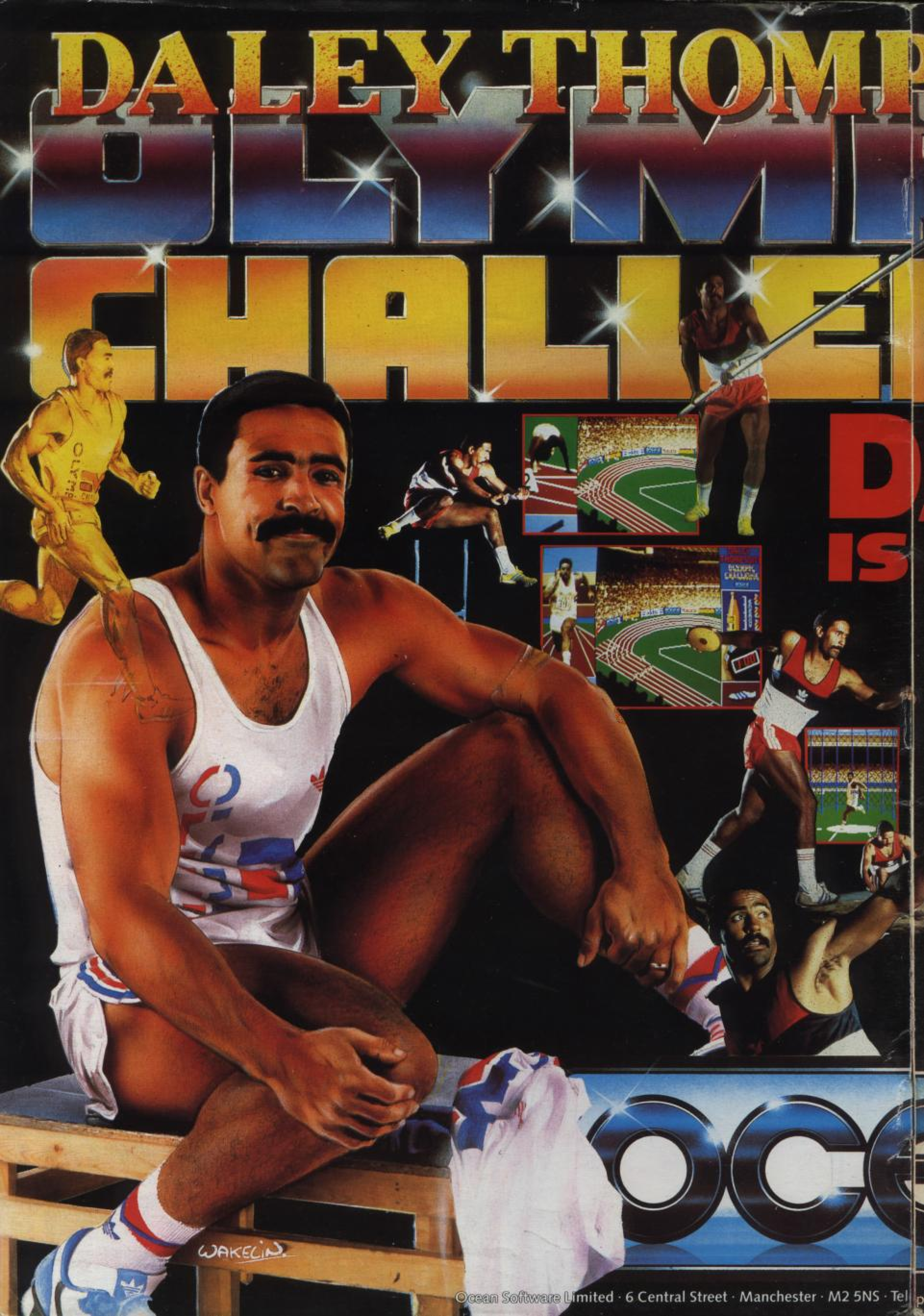
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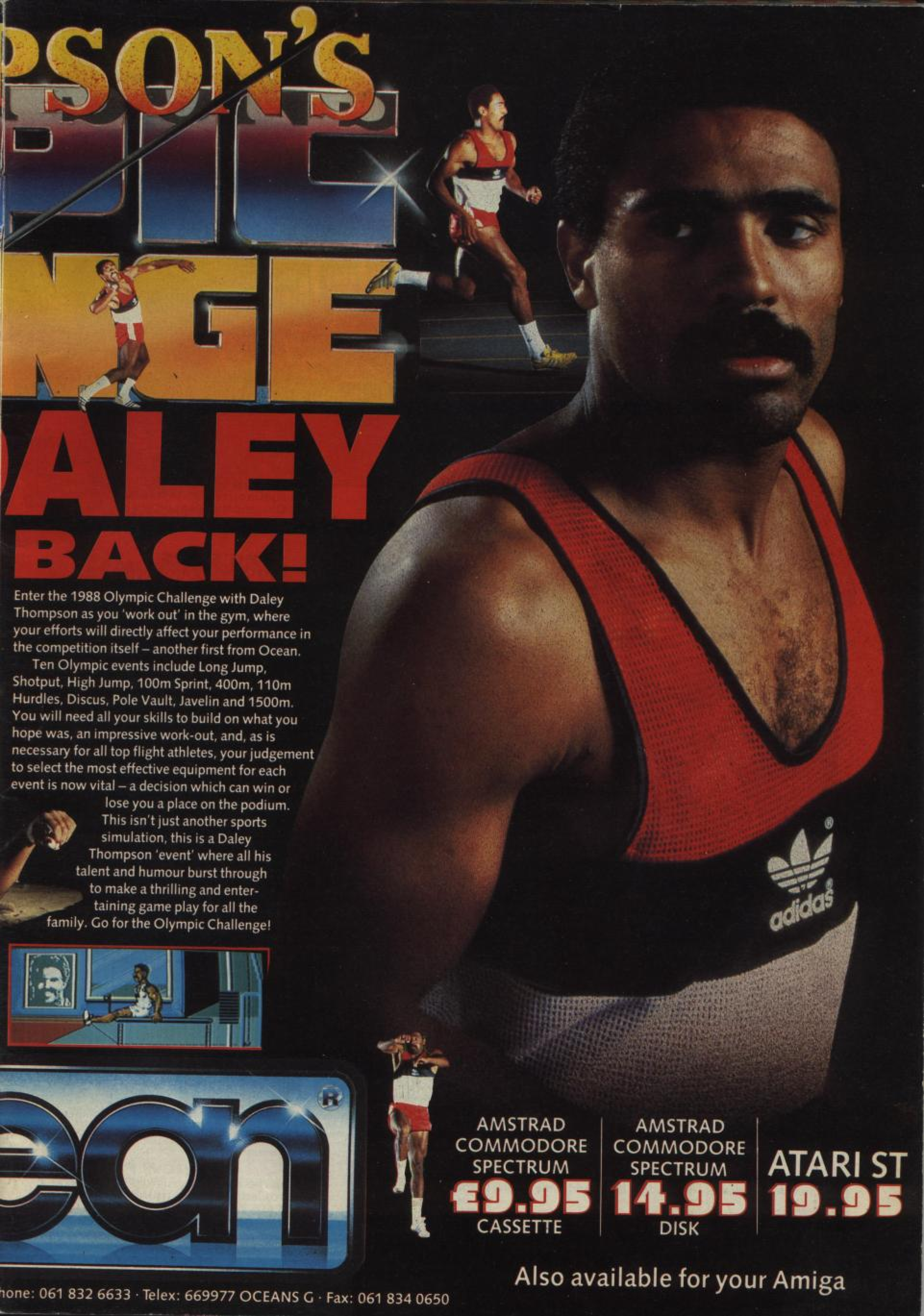
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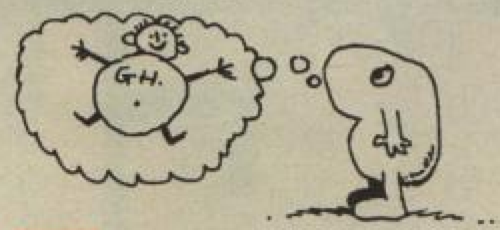
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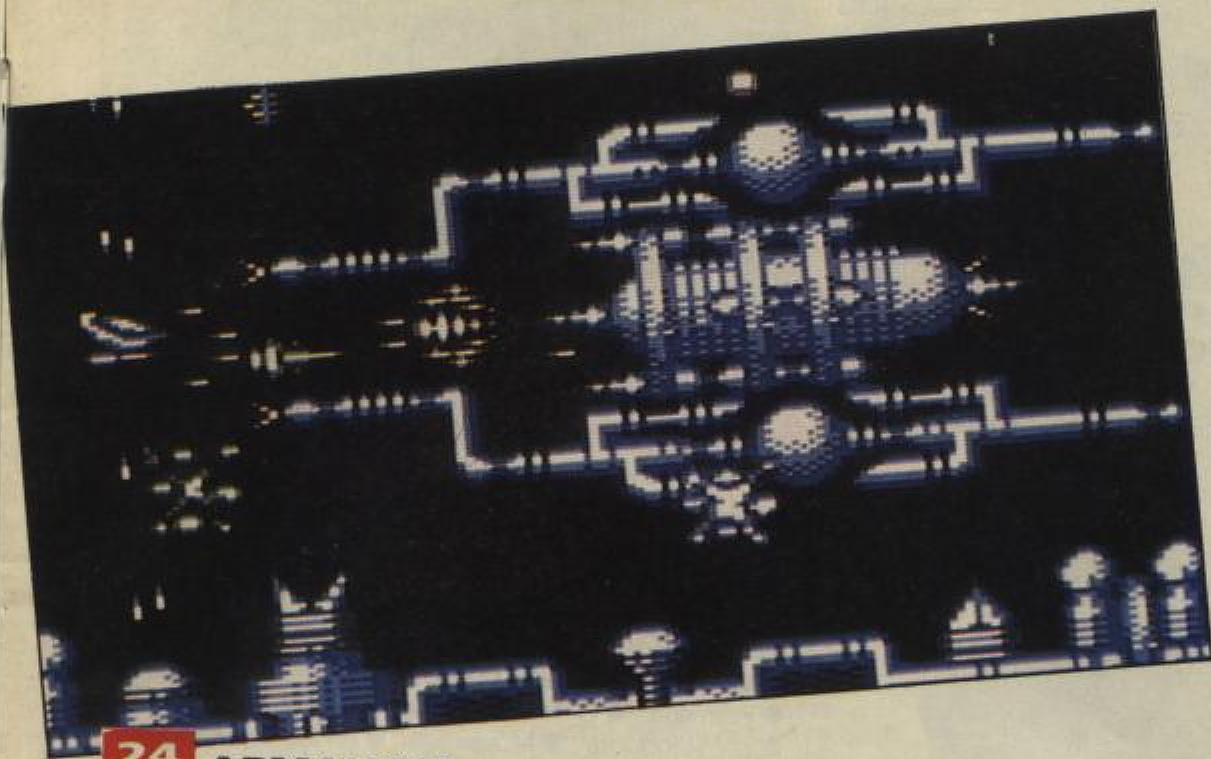




'REGULAR?' 'YES, THANKYOU DOCTOR'



LA CREME ET LES CRAQUERS





SIZE UP THE COMPETITIONS







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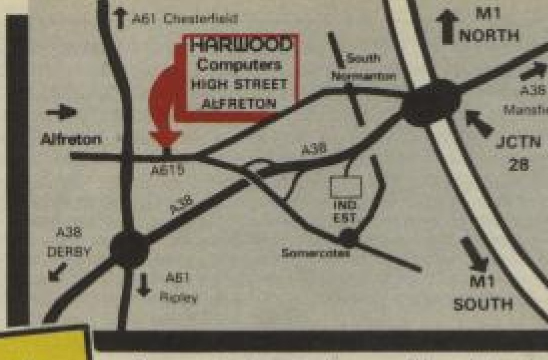
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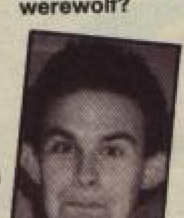
ZZAP! ED



▲ Is it a werewolf?



▲ Is it a fish?



▲ No – it's Maff 'monkey-man' Evans (God, what a pratt!)



▲ Is it Groucho Marx or Deputy Dawg? Give her another meatball and she'll tell you



▲ Herman, the office Pterodactyl

HELLO, GOODBYE

It's all change this month as we bid farewell to the old and welcome the new. ZZAP! 43 marks the advent of a new stage for the magazine – no doubt you've already noticed the slight alteration to the name. However, even though the name's changed, the content of ZZAP! remains the same: still the best selling Commodore magazine around, and now even bigger to accomodate the Amiga. Cor blimey, guv'nor, spit in my eye, etc, etc.

So what happened to that cassette last month? Well, for the full story, turn to page 8, and the Word – there are legal reasons involved! The rest of the news this month is a bit more normal! We bid a fond farewell to Glenys Powell, who has now gone to live and work in Brighton (lots of nice pebbly beaches there): our cuddly results page is now less cuddly for her loss, and there aren't half as many teddy bears around the office. Oh well . . . Taking her place as Editorial Assistant (ie, the person who does all the hard work) is Vivien Vickress – I hope you don't all write to her to complain!

On an even happier note, our reviewing team is now complete! Say welcome, if you will, to Kati Hamza, who has come over from our sister magazine, CRASH, to be our Assistant Editor and reviewer (amongst other things). She likes to describe herself as a scatterbrained, fastidious, madcap kinda gal who likes nothing better than wiping her nose on other people's sleeves. She wears heavy-duty boot-ettes and on off-days sports raggedy Smiths and Suzanne Vega T-shirts, accompanied by an occasional brace or two. Normally she dresses like a sane humanoid – but then, ZZAP! is never normal, is it? She's got a brain the size of a planet (and Marvin's temperament to match), having got a degree in English from the dreaming spires of Oxford. We won't hold it against her – since, she'll probably punch us all in the gob.

This month's mag boasts five features, including a HUGE Amiga section, a new adventurer (Chuck Vomit – a violently offensive Troll), another round up of rereleases, a Def Guide to Shoot 'em ups and a feature on the new Anglia TV *Knightmare* series. If that isn't enough, we've also reviewed over 50 games! Sorry to all those who are missing *Manoeuvres*, but we just didn't have the space.

Till next month then, and an absolutely MEGA Christmas special, ta-rar. Oh – and I hope you like the new editorial page, showing slices of low-life in the Towers this month. Well – it's *different*, isn't it?

Gordon Houghton

Gordon Houghton



▲ No hiding under a bushel for these spring chickens of the software industry. (Paul's outfit – £45, Small Man at C&A)



GAMES REVIEWED

ADVERTISERS INDEX

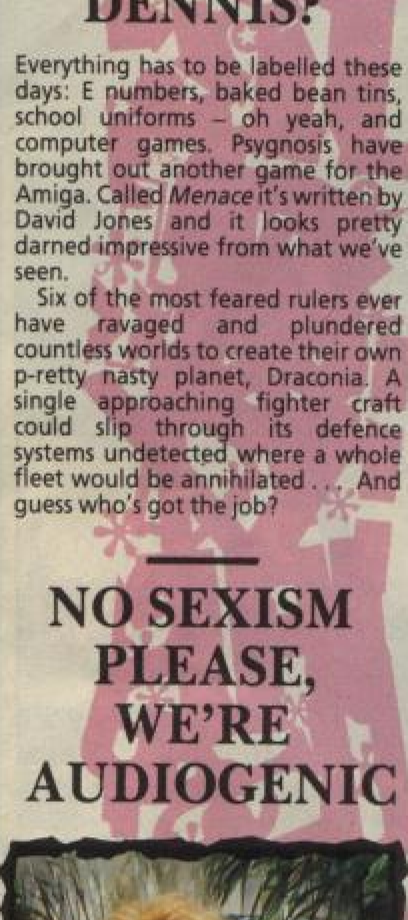
the WORD

PSYGNOSIS DENNIS?

Everything has to be labelled these days: E numbers, baked bean tins, school uniforms – oh yeah, and computer games. Psygnosis have brought out another game for the Amiga. Called *Menace* it's written by David Jones and it looks pretty darned impressive from what we've seen.

Six of the most feared rulers ever have ravaged and plundered countless worlds to create their own p-retty nasty planet, Draconia. A single approaching fighter craft could slip through its defence systems undetected where a whole fleet would be annihilated . . . And guess who's got the job?

NO SEXISM PLEASE, WE'RE AUDIOGENIC



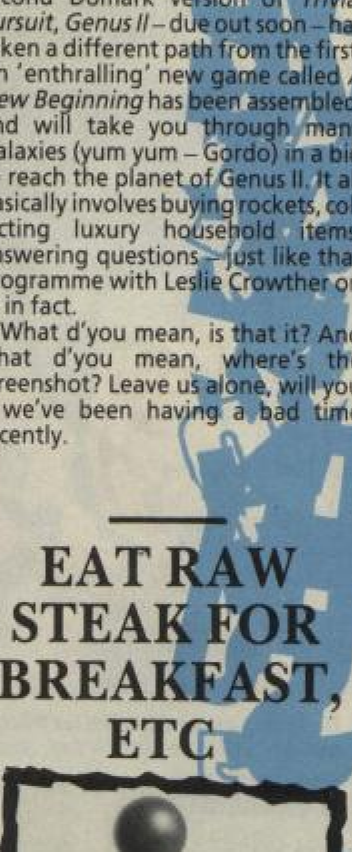
Sensing the rise of sexism in computer software, those crucial Harrovians, Audiogenic, have decided to put a stop to it all. They are currently undergoing research to find out just what girls want from games – Peter Calver explained that they would be bearing in mind the fact that 'girls are more mature and more intelligent than boys of the same age' (quite right too – Kati).

GENIUS II?

Though still incorporating the addictive question and answer format, the second Domark version of *Trivial Pursuit*, *Genus II* – due out soon – has taken a different path from the first. An 'enthralling' new game called *A New Beginning* has been assembled, and will take you through many Galaxies (yum yum – Gordo) in a bid to reach the planet of Genus II. It all basically involves buying rockets, collecting luxury household items, answering questions – just like that programme with Leslie Crowther on it, in fact.

What d'you mean, is that it? And what d'you mean, where's the screenshot? Leave us alone, will you – we've been having a bad time recently.

EAT RAW STEAK FOR BREAKFAST, ETC



We bet you'll think that a title like that is irrelevant for a piece on joysticks. Well – you'd be right. However, this is a particularly tough 'n' rough kinda joystick, known only to its friends as the *Replay Microblaster*. So macho is it that it's got 8 micro switches, it's red and black and it's got non-slip rubber feet (just like Gordon). A 1.4m cable eases gameplaying for those of you with incredibly short arms, and a steel shaft is provided for those who are into steel shafts (know wharra mean, 'Arry?). If you're keen on the picture you see above, pay £12.95 with all due speed.

Oh, by the way, ZZAP!'s doing a special Christmas hardware round up next month, which includes a review of fave joysticks (amongst other thingies) – so keep your eyes and bananas peeled for that, OK?

FIVE COIN-OPS IN THE FOUNTAIN

OK, OK – so it's a bit of a strained title, but we don't have ALL day to write these things, you know! Anyway, the point is, if you'll keep quiet for just one minute, Mediagenic have just announced the signing of licenses for five SEGA coin-ops, due for release next year. These are as follows (in no particular order, just like Kati's brain) dot dot dot

Altered Beast has players teaming up to punch, kick and jump over 'a bizarre assortment of meanies' (ie, the ZZAP! team). Each player's character matures or alters as score increases, turning from a normal, PG-sized human into a super-beast somewhat reminiscent of Gordon after a heavy doughnut-session.

Galaxy Force is one of those *Afterburner*-like speed machines that will have you gasping, panting, and anything else that makes you excited. It's set in the depths of space, which is a pretty nasty place full of yer usual obstacles like molten lava (a cinch), raging fire fields (eeeasy) and meteorite storms (go home!). Keep your eyes peeled and your nose clean for further news as and when.

Hot Rod is not so much a patented arousal device as a race game featuring 30 driving scenarios. Fuel, money, engine trouble and stray dogs (no, only kidding, ha ha . . . er . . .) are the basic ingredients for this sports sim soup. Pick up a ladle and taste it, baby, when it grooves on down to your hip local software boutique.



▲ **Will Mediagenic's conversion match the quality of the original Sega coin-op?**

Sonic Boom puts you in the cockpit of a deadly jet fighter as you blow up just about everything in sight (are there any balloons in this game? or tyres? or inflatable sea-horses? No? Well what else could we blow up?) and tackle a huuuge end-of-level aircraft carrier thingy.

Ace Attacker is a volleyball simulation and . . . er . . . well, it simulates volleyball, doesn't it? Moves such as opens, quicks, pack-attacks and feints are available to you (aren't *you* the lucky one?) and, well – that's it, really. Look, go and read another news piece, will you?

10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT GORDON HOUGHTON



Oh God! There's a huge, blubbery lard-ass coming this way! Aaaaaargh! Oh no – it's OK – it's only ZZAP!'s sheep-loving, half-human answer to the EEC butter mountain, Gordon 'Don't call me fat or I'll kill you' Houghton. But is there a man behind the cliché? Is there a sensitive, caring human being beneath those rippling rolls of reconstituted pork? Does this obese, suety human pudding have a story? Well, no – but listed below are 10 facts (all true) which our crack team managed to uncover about him before being crushed to death.

☆ **He was the model for the Ewok village.**
★ His hobbies include collecting china thimbles, silk flowers and wax fruit.
☆ **Gordon's father was a barrage balloon in the Second World War.**
★ He's fat.
☆ **The well-upholstered Behemoth almost completed a YTS course as a sheep, but was expelled for ravaging a sheepdog.**
★ He is happiest when at home with Rasher, Gammon and Oyster, his pet pigs.
☆ **Five things that Gordon has been mistaken for: Australia; the Queen; an Editor; Bobby Charlton; Paul Glancey.**
★ His most vicious act was to kidnap and skin alive Paul's dog, Banana.
☆ **Our token office overweight freak's average meal includes three chickens, 18lb of chips, 23lb of assorted vegetables and a gallon of gravy – all washed down by six gallons of beer!**
★ Three of his ambitions: to be God; to host Blue Peter like his hero, John Noakes; to grow gills and become a pilchard.

ACCOLADE'S CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

Well, wouldn't you credit it? Four pre-Christmas sports simulations have just been announced by those masters of sims, Accolade. *Serve and Volley* (pictured ➡) is an action/strategy tennis simulation that emphasises correct ball placement, timing and stroke selection. It features a revolutionary new system: 'strobe-o-strobe' (what?) graphics which make the action seem very realistic. *Rack 'em* ('ere, no, missus, etc) is no ordinary snooker sim: it also allows you to design your own games complete with their own rules! Cor!

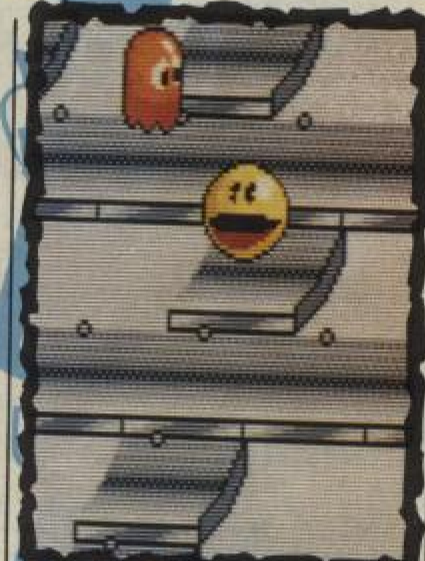


Alternatively, you could pick up *Fast Break* – the first full court three-on-three basketball game for one or two players – or *T.K.O.*, an arcade style, split-screen boxing game featuring large graphics and first-person perspective. All in all, it looks like it's going to be a happy Christmas for sports sim fans . . .

MUNCHORAMA GOES 3D

Those ever so cuddly people and demigods at Grandslam have just announced that they're going to convert that fab 'n' brill 3D arcade game, *Pac-Mania* for the 64 and Amiga. Oooooh! In this modern adaptation of the classic, addictive, interesting, etc, etc original, our yellow-globule friend, Pac, faces the challenges of Block Town, Pac Man's park, Sandbox Land and Jungly Steps.

Of course those nasty horrid ghosties Blinky, Pinky, Inky and Clyde are out to skin him alive – but you wouldn't let them do that now, would you? Interested Pac-Man rescuers should pay £19.95 for the Amiga version in mid-October or £9.95 (£14.95) for the 64 version, due out mid-November.



BLOOD ON THE 64!

It's about exploration, communication and ultimate survival – it's a hard galaxy out there and only rough 'n' tough applicants need apply. What are we talking about? *Captain Blood* from Infogrames, coming soon for the 64 (£9.95, £14.95) and Amiga (£24.95).

If it's anything like the ST version it should be pretty impressive – there's a brilliant Jean-Michel Jarre soundtrack and some fantastic vector grafix. The only reservation we have is against the variety – the only thing that we found lacking with the Amiga's rival . . .



WHO'S THAT GIRL?



For those of you who are into wearing kinky dragon outfits and rescuing bimbos in distress, Code Masters have an upcoming game called *Super Dragon Slayer* (yea, verily and forsooth, we could find the word *Simulator* nowhere in sight). Does the prince have enough balls to slay the dragon? Is he playing the standard or expert version? Are you going to pay £4.99 for it now that it's out on the shelves? Or will you wait for the ZZAP! review? Tune in next month.

THE 64 VIRUS

All right, we're sick people if that title made you think that there's a 64 virus going around. We're sick, and we're ashamed about it. We won't do it again, honest. Anyway, the point is, those brain surgeons at Trilogic have come up with an everso nice cartridge which enables you to quickly see if there is a problem with your 64 and identify which of the major chips is faulty.

As if this isn't enough, you can also test every key on the keyboard, both joystick ports, the serial, user and cartridge ports and up to ten million other things (approximately). It costs £18.99, and interested parties should contact the Bradford company on 0274-691115.

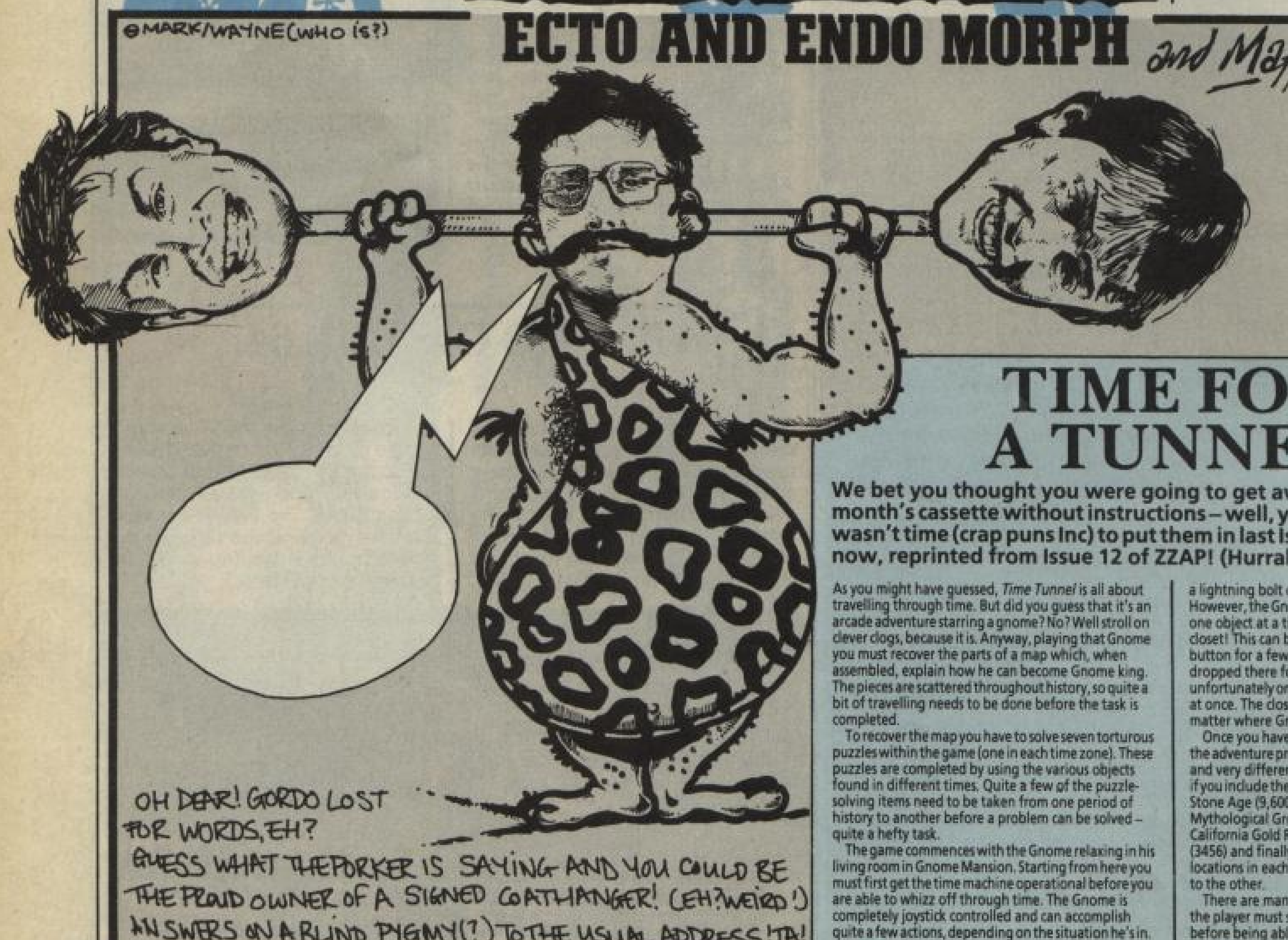


SMARTER THAN THE AVERAGE SOFTWARE



All right – we know *Yogi Bear*'s been out for a while on budget now – but this piece of news isn't entirely about that, OK? It's more about Alternative, really – they're now making claims to be the most successful software house this summer – which, if it's true, just goes to show that budget software is definitely taking over at last.

Anyway, the stuff you're probably more interested in is that a) *Yogi Bear* got 61% in Issue 32 and b) there are a couple more games coming from Alternative. These are *BMX Ninja* and *Endzone* – neither of which we've had for review (sob). Budget houses hardly ever send out games to anyone these days (sniff), so we can't tell you what we think of them, can we (sob, sob)? Oh well, back to slaving over a hot word processor.



TIME FOR A TUNNEL?

We bet you thought you were going to get away with playing last month's cassette without instructions – well, you were wrong! There wasn't time (crap puns Inc) to put them in last Issue, so here they are now, reprinted from Issue 12 of ZZAP! (Hurrah!)

As you might have guessed, *Time Tunnel* is all about travelling through time. But did you guess that it's an arcade adventure starring a gnome? No? Well stroll on clever clogs, because it is. Anyway, playing that Gnome you must recover the parts of a map which, when assembled, explain how he can become Gnome king. The pieces are scattered throughout history, so quite a bit of travelling needs to be done before the task is completed.

To recover the map you have to solve seven torturous puzzles within the game (one in each time zone). These puzzles are completed by using the various objects found in different times. Quite a few of the puzzle-solving items need to be taken from one period of history to another before a problem can be solved – quite a hefty task.

The game commences with the Gnome relaxing in his living room in Gnome Mansion. Starting from here you must first get the time machine operational before you are able to whizz off through time. The Gnome is completely joystick controlled and can accomplish quite a few actions, depending on the situation he's in. Objects can be picked up, dropped, set in motion or moved if he's standing near them (doors, lifts etc). Also, a lightning bolt can be fired when facing left or right. However, the Gnome has a problem as he can only carry one object at a time, but don't despair – Gnome has a closet! This can be entered by holding down the fire button for a few seconds. An object can then be dropped there for retrieval later in the game, but unfortunately only eight items can be left in the closet at once. The closet can be called up at any time, no matter where Gnome is in history.

Once you have the time machine fully operational, the adventure proper can begin. There are seven varied and very different periods of time to be visited – eight if you include the present. The seven time zones are the Stone Age (9,600 BC), Magical Persia (893 BC), Mythological Greece (86 BC), Colonial Salem (1692), California Gold Rush (1849), Intergalactic Spaceship (3456) and finally The Black Hole (9999). The various locations in each period 'flick' when moving from one to the other.

There are many objects within each time zone, but the player must sort out the wheat from the chaff before being able to solve the puzzles. The rest is just pure deduction – well, it would be too easy otherwise, wouldn't it?

KATAKIS? WHAT KATAKIS?

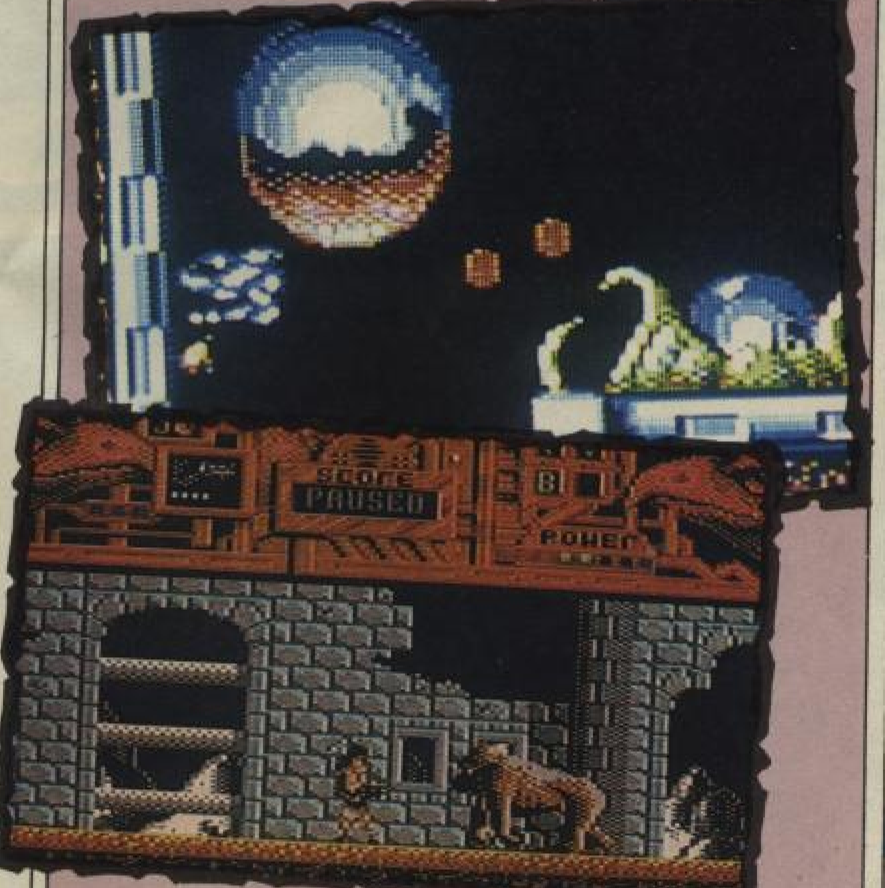
If you're feeling confused, fed up, surprised, amazed, flabbergasted or annoyed because last month's cover cassette, billed as *Katakis*, turned out to be *Time Tunnel*, here's the explanation.

Katakis was a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up very much in the *R-Type* mould. In fact Activision, who hold the license from Irem to produce the official *R-Type* conversion (due for release later this year), thought it was so much like *R-Type* that they had a case for legal action. US Gold agreed to halt publication not only of *Katakis* itself but of all promotional material connected with the game.

ZZAP! had just gone to press. Cover and reviews had been printed, the *Katakis* tapes had been duplicated but the magazine hadn't been distributed yet. The cover cassette was classified as promotional material, and US Gold had agreed to withdraw all promotional material – this meant we were legally obliged to remove the cassette from the cover. In fact, all versions of *Katakis* have now been withdrawn – so you won't see it on the shelves, either!

As for ZZAP! Issue 42, US Gold stepped in at the last minute with an alternative cassette which turned out to be *Time Tunnel*. In the resulting confusion, we were given to understand that this was a previously unreleased game – in fact, it had been reviewed in Issue 12 and gained an overall rating of 49%.

As the magazines had been printed, there was no time to include instructions or any form of explanation. The magazine had already been delayed several days due to duplication of the alternative cassettes – any further delay and you probably wouldn't have got ZZAP! at all!



For scheduling reasons, this month's promised tape – the Gold Medal winning *Armalyte* – has been removed; but then, who can complain when there's a level of the Sizzler-rated *Cybernoid 2* and a stage from the Gold Medal rated *Hawkeye* instead?

We'd like to apologise to all our readers for all the inconvenience caused by the mix-up – it was a situation that was very much out of our hands. To help you make the best of *Time Tunnel* we've included the instructions on this page. Er . . . and that's it, really.

ZZAP! MEGATAPE CYBERNOID 2 AND HAWKEYE

Loading and playing *Cybernoid 2*

OBVIOUS BIT: Put the cassette in the deck, press SHIFT and RUN/STOP on the keyboard and, unless the cassette was wrapped in bacon or you haven't got a 64, the program should begin to load.

NOT SO OBVIOUS BIT: Well, play the level as the review on pages 16-17 explains. Collect as much cargo as possible if you like, but the basic thing is to keep your nose clean and blast everything in sight: there's nothing worse than bogeys getting in the way of a good blast, we always say. But that's not all – pressing the following keys and holding down the fire button makes you a real hard man (or girly):

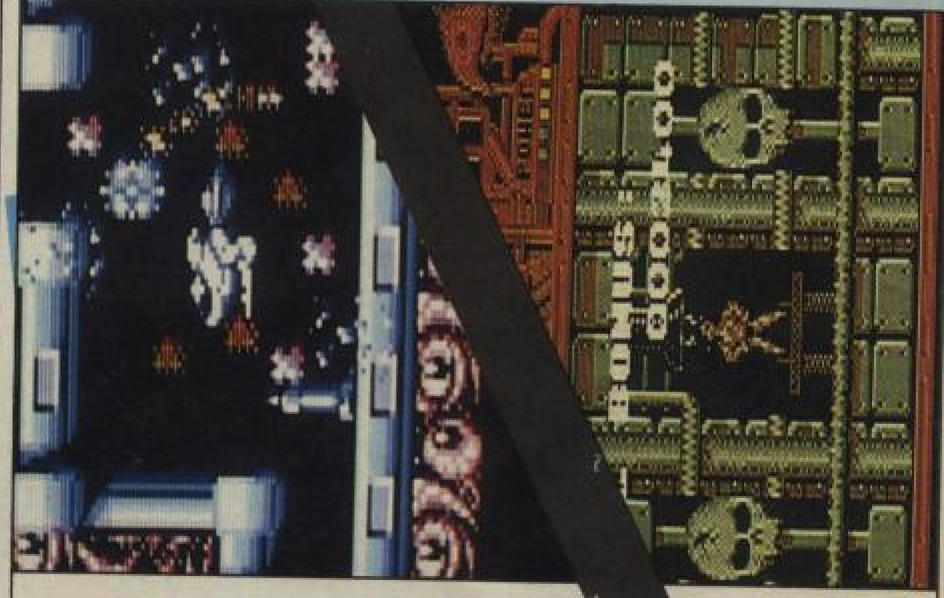
1. *Bombs*
2. *Time bombs*
3. *Shields* (Limited, mind – so no getting cocky)
4. *Seekers* (but not the 70s pop group)
5. *Bouncers*
6. *Smart Bomb* (er . . . well, it wouldn't be a shmup without a smart, would it?)
7. *Trackers*

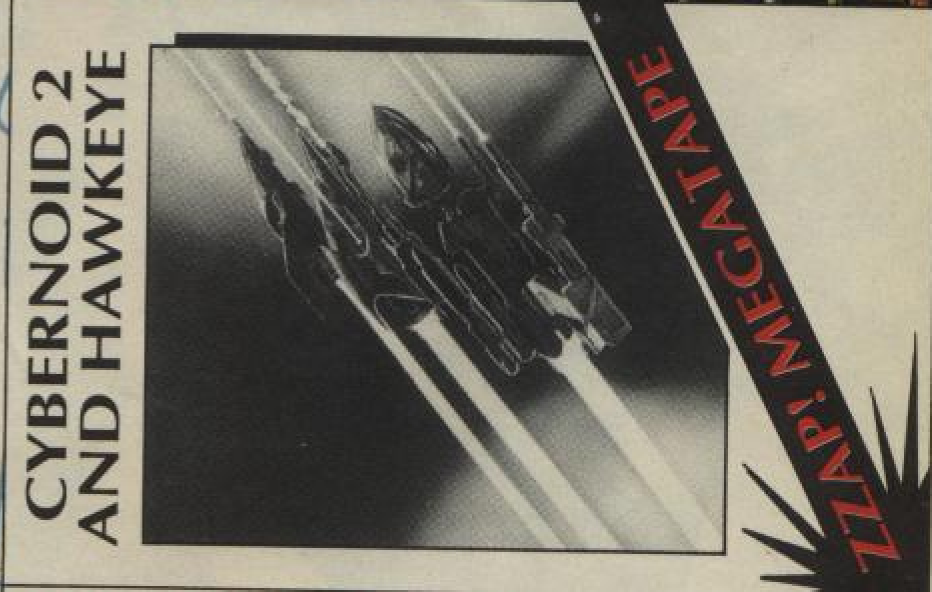
So get funky with that joystick and get blasting, babe: pressing fire as normal unleashes a pretty awesome rocket launcher anyway, so what are you worrying about? Look – get on with it, will you, and find out just why we gave it a Sizzler.

Loading and playing *Hawkeye*

OBVIOUS BIT: As before – how much more obvious do you want it? Do you want it on a plate with your name on?

NOT SO OBVIOUS BIT: Admit it – did you read that review in issue 40 or not? You'll know, then, just how good we think this game is. That's not going to interest you much, though – if you haven't played it, you'll want to know things like 'run around collecting hidden icons and kill everything'. Well, we're sorry, but space has run out, so you'll just have to discover things for yourself or go out and buy the game.





ZZAP! MEGATAPE CYBERNOID 2 AND HAWKEYE

To try and make up for the disappointment of last month's cassette (and you weren't the only disappointed ones, believe us!), we've got a playable level of one of this issue's Sizzlers, *Cybernoid 2* and the Gold Medal-rated *Hawkeye* on one cassette – beat that! A level each from two of the best games you'll see this year – and it only cost you 25p more! (mumble, mumble)



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RED STORM RISING

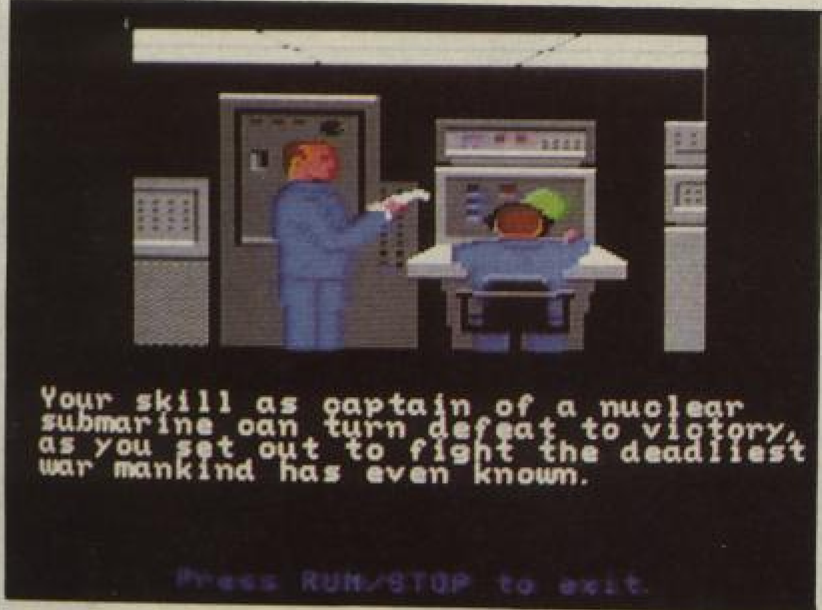
Microprose, £14.95 cassette, £19.95 disk

Assume for a moment that the unthinkable has happened – the Russian Politburo has decided to go for world domination. In the world's oceans nuclear submarines prowl the waters, waiting for orders to release powerful nuclear warheads. Worse still – you're the captain of an American submarine . . .

You can select one of six submersibles or leave it up to a higher authority to appoint one to you.

You choose from four skill options and ten missions ranging from practice sorties, through real confrontations with Soviet task forces, aircraft carriers and vessels, to the ultimate encounter – World War Three.

Mission orders follow, then you're on your own. Sounding General Quarters brings up readings of your heading, depth, speed, rudder and diving planes status and a tactical display.



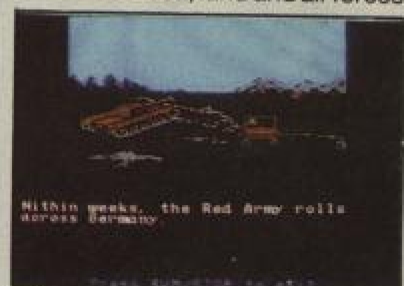
▲ As usual, it's the presentation that distinguishes the MicroProse simulation from all the rest



Red Storm Rising must be the ultimate vehicle for the rather extremist politics of MicroProse games, but leaving the moralisms aside, I have to admit it really is a staggeringly deep game. I wasn't surprised by the excellent packaging, or by the superb on-screen presentation which comprises the usual enormous number of options and even descriptive animated sequences which add to the atmosphere – I wasn't even surprised by the awful dirge of a soundtrack. I did miss the graphical action which other Microprose simulations sport, though: no proper 3D graphics, just animated maps, charts and a periscope view which do their job very well but would, I feel, put off the casual simulation player. If you're more interested in fast-paced strategy action than visual thrills, this game is definitely for you.

This VDU shows RADAR and SONAR plots of the surrounding seaways, as well as periscope views, all of which can zoom in and out. Keyboard controls call up statistics on sea conditions, weapons, acoustic readings which could identify nearby vessels and a computer database holding information on every military vessel you are likely to run into.

In certain large-scale scenarios you can also revert to a map of the Norwegian Sea Theatre to see what effect your actions are having on the conflict. The map shows both sides' sea, land and air forces



and even the military satellites which are relaying the information.

To go into all the game's strategic subtleties would take several pages, so to gain real inside knowledge of how the program works you'll just have to read the lengthy manual yourself!



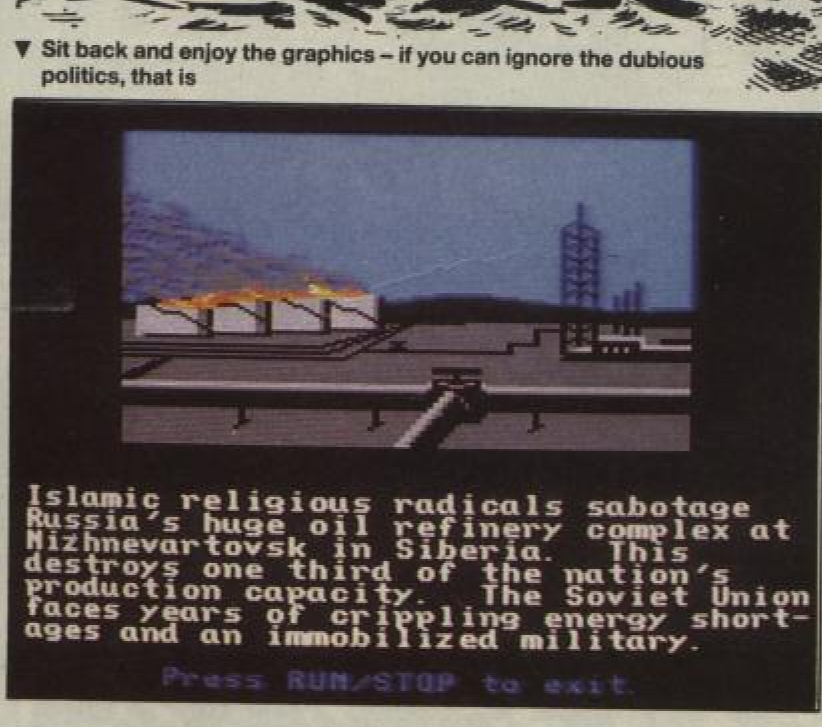
Cor blimey! There ain't 'alf a lot to this game! Red Storm Rising is really complex with an incredible number of controls and options that have to be learnt. To the casual strategist (like myself) it all seems a bit over the top. The way actions have to be carried out reminds me of role-playing board games, where you have to roll a die before doing anything, thus slowing things up a great deal. Some of the intermissions depicting the situation of your mission are very atmospheric, but screen after screen of diagrams and numbers rather limits the sense of reality. Red Storm Rising isn't a game to be taken lightly: each mission must be carefully planned and executed, thus putting it in the realm of 'hardened strategist only' games.





MicroProse have certainly produced another whopper of a simulation complete with a 108-page manual and an incredible selection of keys. Phew! Even though I'm not the world's greatest fan of submarine simulations, I can appreciate the obvious work and attention that's gone into this. It takes a lot of patience to reap the rewards, though, and you'll only enjoy it if you've got a really strategic mind and a head for some nerve-wracking waiting around. What I can't appreciate, however, is the really nationalistic tone of the narrative and the jingoistic view of the East. I can't really see how implications that the Russians deliberately kill foreign schoolchildren for favourable publicity are in the least bit relevant to the game. In the light of glasnost, that's certainly something to consider before you buy.

▼ Sit back and enjoy the graphics – if you can ignore the dubious politics, that is



PRESENTATION 97%
Superb throughout. Keyboard overlays, detailed manuals, excellent on-screen introduction and animated scene-setting sequences.

GRAPHICS 77%
Functional in the game itself, but excellent in the intermissions.

SOUND 35%
Sombre title screen dirge and minimal submarine effects.

HOOKABILITY 74%
Plethora of controls and visually uninspiring gameplay are somewhat off-putting at first.

LASTABILITY 93%
An enormous level of depth means there's plenty to play for.

OVERALL 86%
A simulation of enormous magnitude, but more suited to experienced simulator buffs.

ZZAP! TEST

SIZZLER

CYBERNOID II

Hewson, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk

●The brilliant, explosive and demanding sequel to *Cybernoid* hits the 64

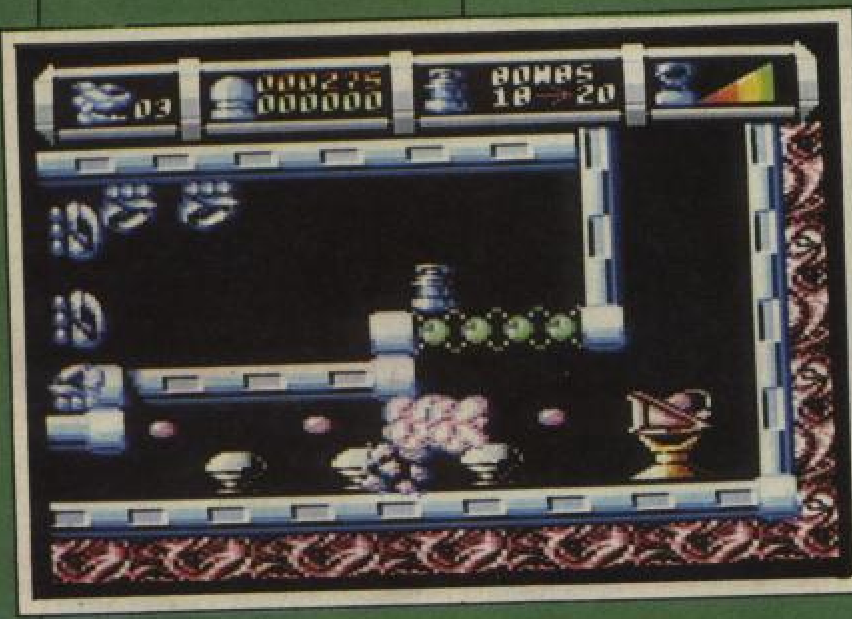


Remember the good old days? Boy, were you hard. If there was a board to sleep on you slept on the floor. If there was a glass to drink from you smashed it up and drank your beer neat, straight off the ground. If the Federation needed it, you swallowed a jar of tin tacks, tied a Rambo band around your head, leapt into the nearest Cybernoid and – no messing about, no questions asked – you were off.

Just when you thought it was safe to climb back in your lean, mean fighting machine, Cybernoid 2 **appears! I didn't think it possible, but this is much better than the original. Not only is it tougher – one or two writers here (who shall remain nameless, Maff) used all their lives getting off the first two screens – it's also more varied. You've got more weapons (seven in all) and there are harder aliens to face – all of them beautifully designed, coloured and animated. Each screen has its own method of tackling, but that's not to say you can't just sit there beating the c**p out of any alien who comes within missile distance! Every part of this game makes demands on some of your reactions – whether it's frantically dodging ground-crawlers, trying to sneak a gap between bullets or simply precise blasting. But be warned – it's tough, and it's going to take a lot of patience to master. Try our cassette and see!**

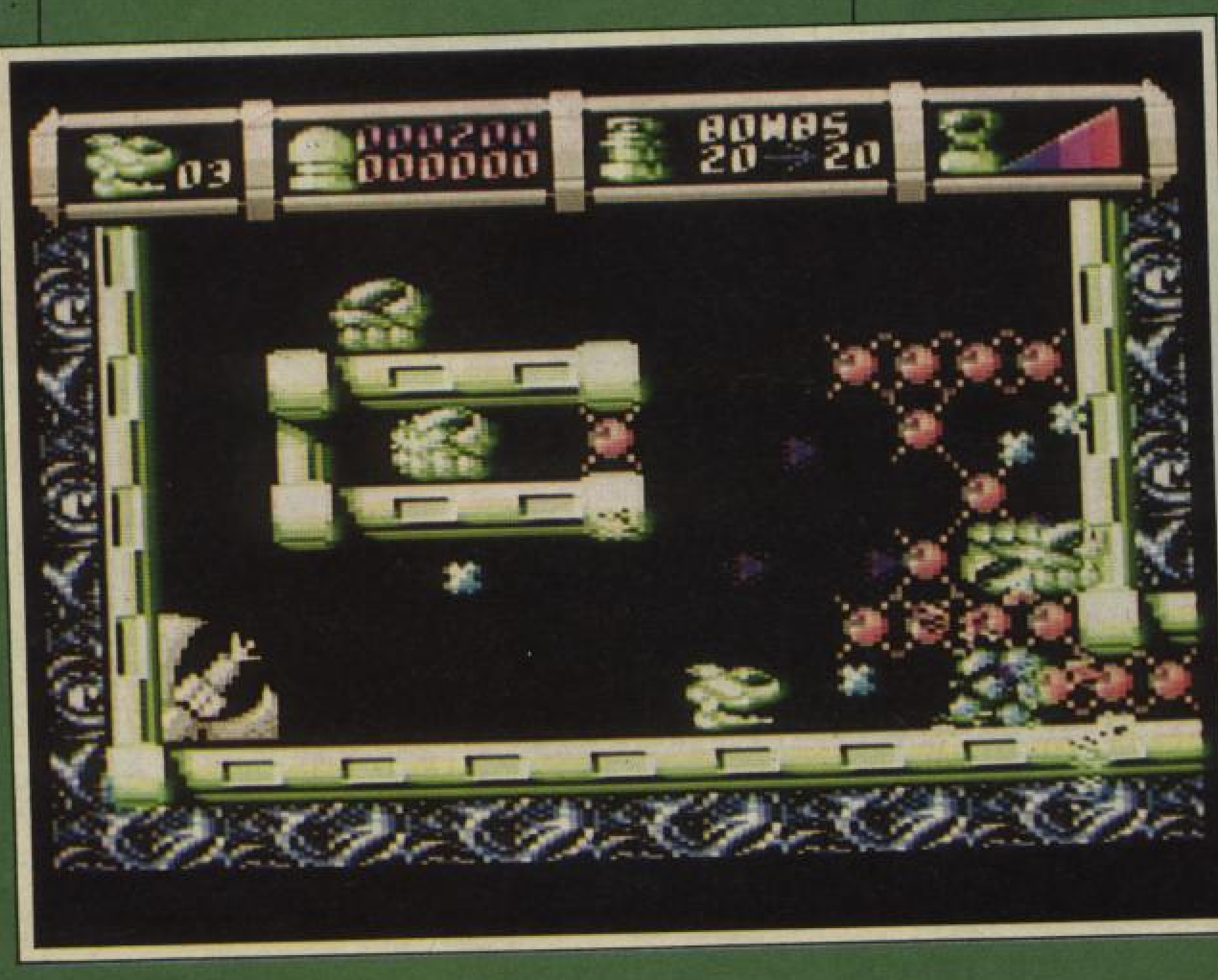
Yeah! Beat them aliens, blast them, maim them, beat them into the ground. Cor! Really gets rid of your excess aggression playing this game. All of a sudden I feel at peace with the world. Not that I'd call Cybernoid II **the easiest game in the world to play. In fact, under pressure, I'd probably admit to it being one of the hardest. For a start, there are loads more weapons, bombs, nasties and meanies than there were in** Cybernoid. **Some of them are really devious too. Just when you think it's OK to draw a sigh of relief, you realise that the emplacement you've just blasted to smithereens had an even more dangerous weapon lurking inside it and by the time you've thought about dealing with that you're dead. And whatever you do, don't relax when you're about to enter a new screen. More often than not there's some even more horrific monster waiting to melt you the minute you get to the other side. If you like your cookies really tough, you'll love** Cybernoid II **'cos you'd be hard pressed to find a tougher cookie than this.**

▼ Well, nobody said it was easy. Get in your ship and try it again





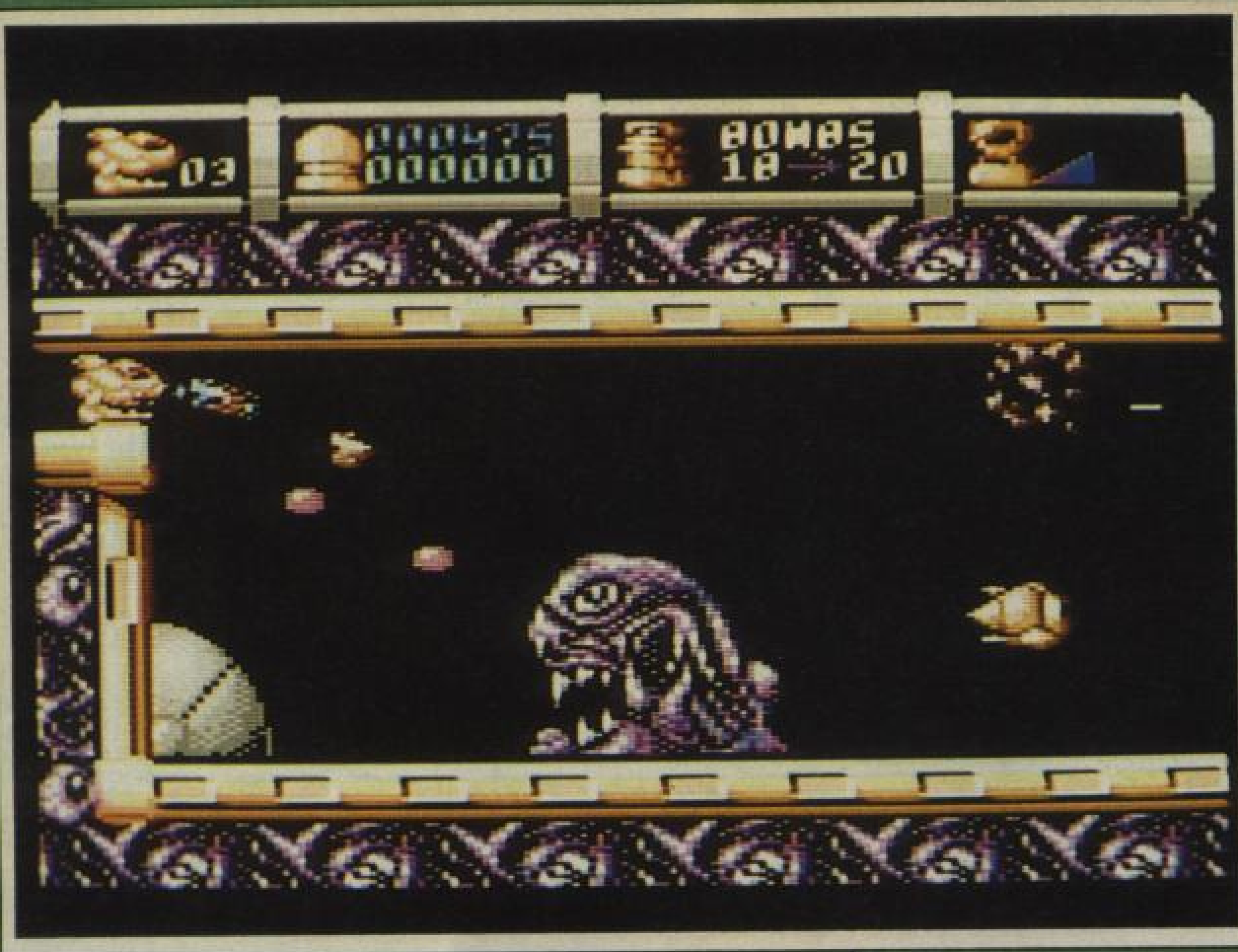
▼ *Cybernoid 2* – more complex than trying to make sense of what Kati's saying



Phwoar! Didn't you get rid of a whole fleet of pirates single-handedly? Yessir, Mr Incredibly Hard Man, you certainly did and now the Federation, under attack from vicious enemies, is asking you to do it again. Is it dangerous? Yup. Is it suicidal? Yessir. Can you refuse? Nope. Of course not.

While you've been taking a typical well-hard geezer's rest, your favourite fighting machine has had a bit of a facelift. In addition to the usual selection of bombs, bouncers, seekers, smart bombs and shields, it's got a couple of extra weapons up its sleeve. If you feel like leaving a trail of death and destruction in your wake, drop a few time bombs and wait. Stuck beneath an alien emplacement? Dead easy – just fire one of those ultra powerful, mega-violent tracking bombs. It'll move right round the screen blasting every little living thing in sight.

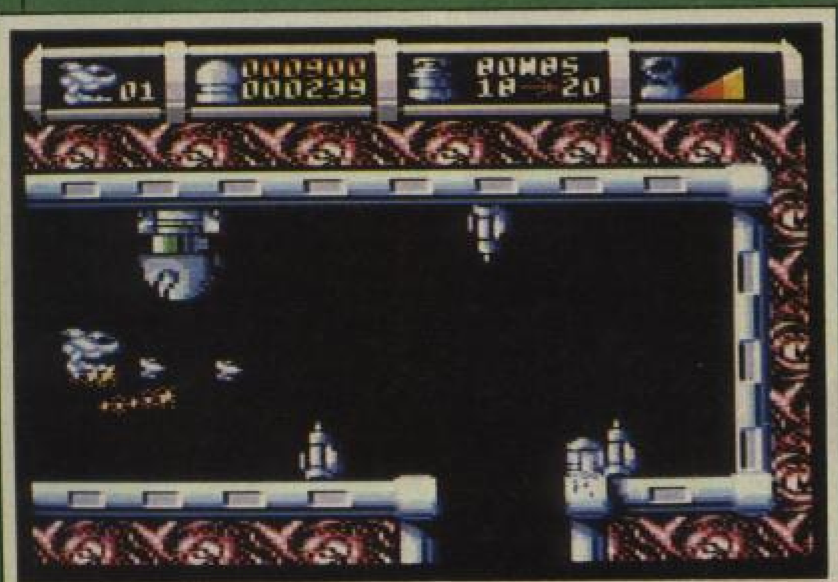
There's just one thing: while you've been away the enemy hasn't been exactly well . . . er . . . idle either. In fact, they've booby-trapped the flight paths with more bullet pods, weapon emplacements, caterpillar death squads and homing aliens than you could shake a stick at (if you had one, that is). Worse still,



◄ Aargh! (Well you wouldn't want to meet a bloke like that on a dark night – it's even more scary when he's in the *first* level

you've only got limited supplies of each weapon so if you use all your shields up too soon you'll end up making a speedy trip to the great scrap-yard in the sky – and this time you won't come back.

You do get a few goodies for your trouble though. Every now and then you can pick up a mace or a bonus package left by some negligent alien ship. But that's about it – from now on, you're on your own.

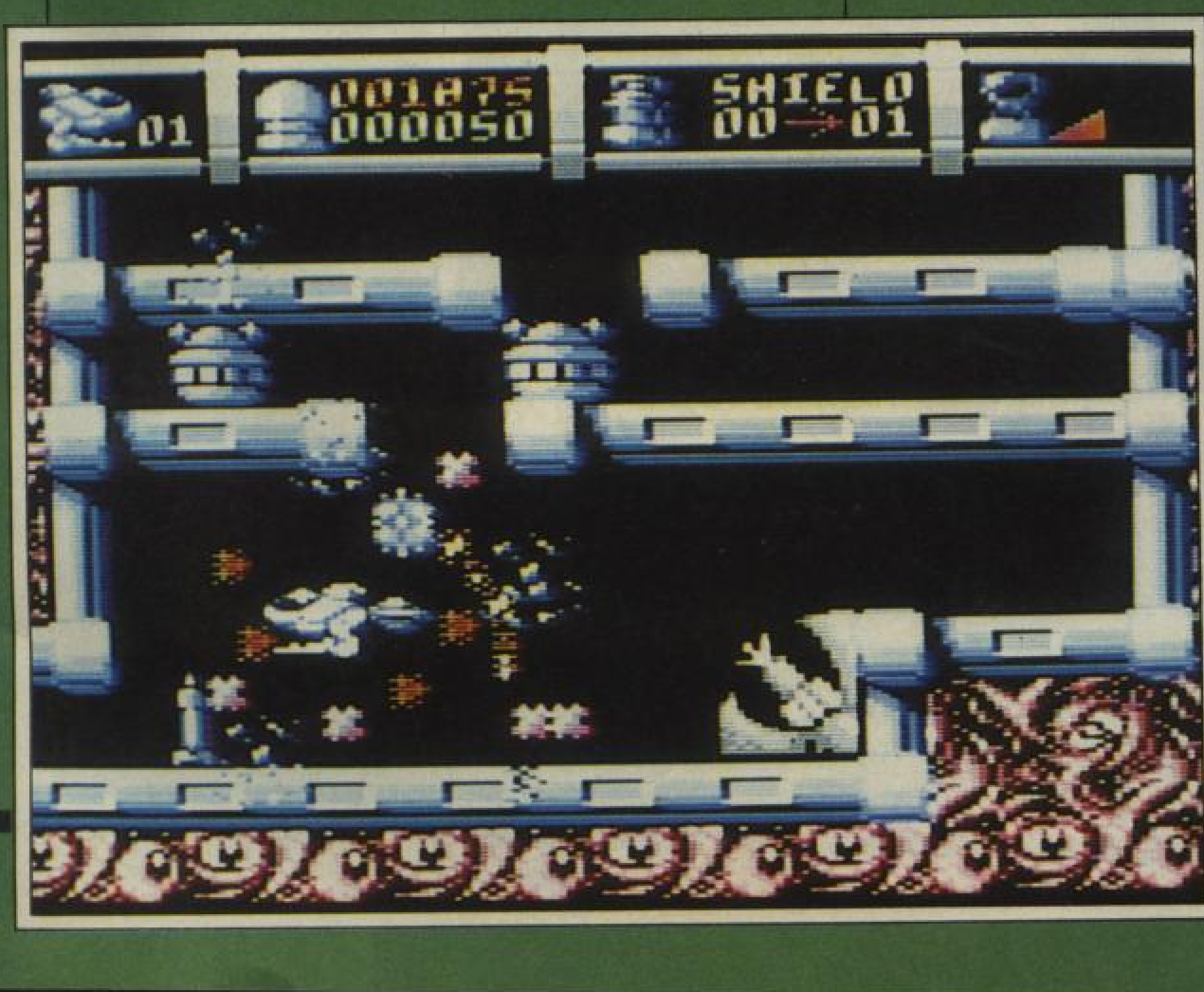


▼ And you thought the vertical pipes in *Cybernoid* were hard . . .

Eeek! Watch out, Cameron! USE THE BOUNCE BOMBS!!



I thought Cybernoid **was a hard act to follow, but boy have Hewson followed it! For a start, the graphics – talk about impressive animation and brilliant explosive effects! As my dad always says, it's enough to take your breath away. Phew! The in-game music isn't quite as haunting as the original** Cybernoid **soundtrack but once you've heard it once or twice it really starts to grow on you. Oh yeah, I haven't said anything about the gameplay yet. It's not easy (I lost three lives trying to get out of screen one) but it certainly is addictive. You always seem to be on the point of death just as you're discovering something new and after that . . . well, you've just got to go back to the beginning again. In fact, that's exactly what I think I'll do . . .**



PRESENTATION 89%
User-friendly starting menu, redefinable keys, plus optional music or sound effects.

GRAPHICS 94%
Brilliantly animated and packed with incredible detail – even more than in the original *Cybernoid*!

SOUND 88%
A brilliant soundtrack (though not as punchy as the first one, we thought) and some pretty neat spot effects – just the right atmosphere.

HOOKABILITY 80%
It's a tad tough to get into because you've got everything thrown at you from the beginning.

LASTABILITY 93%
Plenty of blast and bomb action for *Cybernoid*-starved shoot 'em up fans.

OVERALL 91%
If the original hadn't already been released, this would be well on its way to a higher accolade.

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

Graftgold/Firebird, £9.95 cassette, £12.95 disk

Long, long ago, in a time before anyone can remember, a mystical object known as the Zodiac Power Source was made. It was discovered to be a focal point for the powers of evil and so was buried. Many years have passed since then and the Power Source has found a suitable mind to move towards. This mind belongs to Krillys, a dabbler in the mystical arts.

Krillys learned how to separate the elements of the Power Source, but this caused a collision between it and another magical force. The surrounding lands were thrown into disarray.

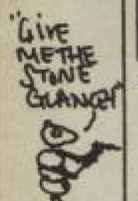
Two adventurers have the ability to restore the land to order: Tartarus and Teron. They must search the lands for elemental tablets and restore the Zodiac Power Source to its original form.

With or without a friend you can take the part of one of these adventurers. At the start of the quest you have a limited supply of magic shields, a defensive weapon, a handful of money and a cryptic clue given to you by a mage just before the ground swallows him up. Extra weapons, shields and other objects can be bought in shops found throughout the environment.

To complete the quest, you must reconstruct the Power Source and return it to the old man's house before twelve moons pass. Otherwise Krillys will control the land (cue three dramatic chords: da-da-DAAAA!).



▲ He flies through the air with the greatest of ease, Over nasty old puddles and horrid old trees . . .





Ever since Gribbly's Day Out, **Graftgold's reputation has been almost flawless, but now we have a release that fails to live up to that record.** Soldier Of Fortune **is an incredibly average game which is even more surprising when you learn that its' author is the creator of** Zynaps**. The opening screen is very much in the usual Graftgold mould (horizontal colour bars and all that) but as soon as you start the game you know that something is amiss. The first thing you see is a set of bland background colours with a really weird series of explosions in the sky (don't ask me why) and some ropey sound effects. Not only that – the gameplay is pretty average as well, not to mention annoying. I don't know about anyone else, but after fighting my way through a set of platforms and bouncing rocks, I expect to find more than just another in a long line of similar shops (aaargh!). So BE WARNED! Just because it says Graftgold on the packaging, don't be fooled into thinking you're going to get another** Paradroid **or** Uridium**!**



It's strange, but since they left Hewson, Graftgold never seem to have been able to come up with the sort of goods they produced in the days of Paradroid**, and releases such as** Magnetron **and** Soldier of Fortune **typify this. Graphically the game is quite pretty, if rather lacking in variety, but the woodland and village scenery including all the shop sequences make it look like the Hewson oldie,** Firelord**. Any small amount of credibility the resemblance lends** Soldier of Fortune **is wasted by pretty slow and tedious gameplay consisting of the odd bit of blasting, collecting coins and then buying weapons and scrolls. I don't think either the arcade or the adventuring elements are sufficiently outstanding to keep me coming back for more, so I'm left pretty disappointed with a game I was expecting a lot from. Sigh!**



▲ Is this Tartarus or Teron? It's hard to tell . . .



We're obviously dealing with a strange transference of matter here. Somehow, somewhere the basic constituents of Hewson's Firelord **and Elite's** Ghosts 'n' Goblins **have mingled and resurrected themselves as Graftgold's** Soldier Of Fortune**. Weird. What's come out isn't really as good as either of the other games. There are a lot of aspects, like the trading or the platform element which could have been developed, but they just fall flat. Neither the blurry graphics (the sprites are really tiny) or the tinny sound were compelling enough to keep me playing for long – not least because there's nothing to tell you what any of the icons mean. Give me** Ghosts 'n' Goblins **any day.**

PRESENTATION 64%
Quite a few annoying delays and many confusing symbols.

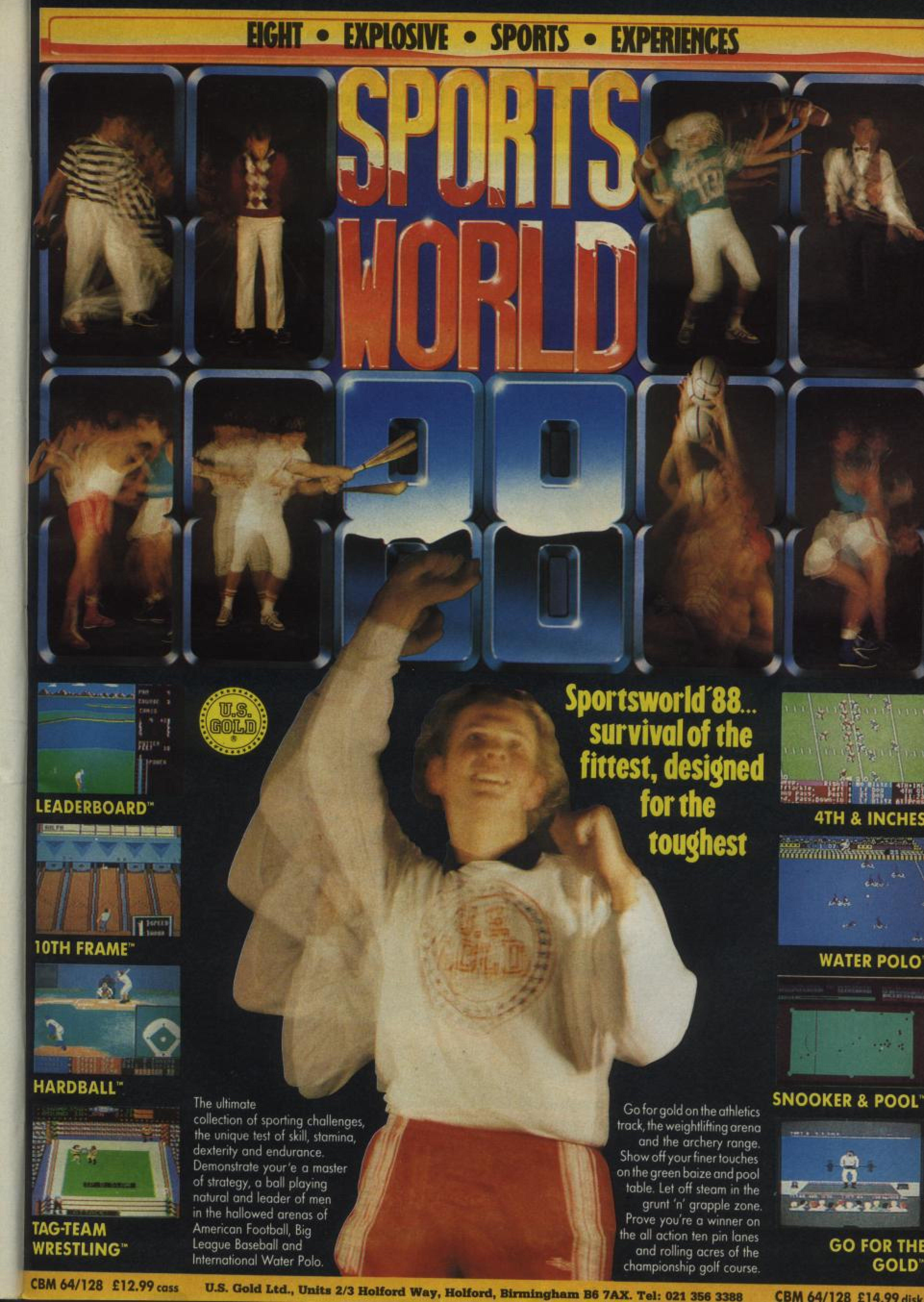
GRAPHICS 71%
An adequate main sprite travelling through bland scenery.

SOUND 62%
Dodgy tune and uninteresting spot effects.

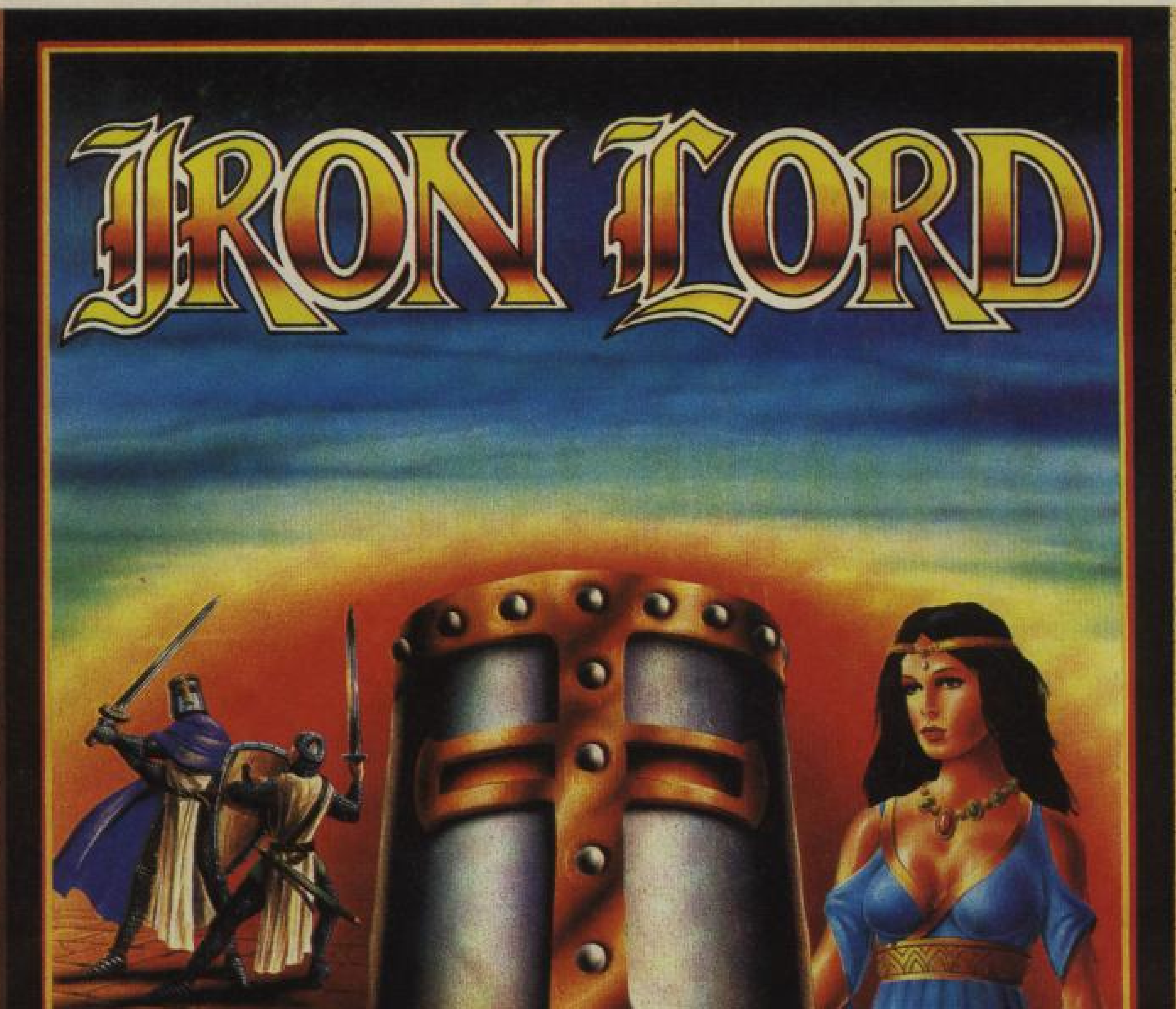
HOOKABILITY 69%
Of course there's the standard 'let's have a look around' hook . . .

LASTABILITY 59%
However, 'looking around' so many similar locations soon becomes very tedious.

OVERALL 66%
A very disappointing release from a partnership that should have given us something really special.


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UBI SOFT presents



BARBARIAN

Melbourne House/Psygnosis, £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk

The small village of Thelston is harbouring a secret: the most famous dragon slayer of them all. Thoron the hunter wished to pass his skills down to his son, Hegor, so he trained the boy from a very early age in the use of all weapons.

One day, there was a great commotion at the edge of the village; curious, Hegor ran there only to see his own father in the middle of a ferocious battle with a huge dragon. Thoron fought fiercely and managed to force the beast to leave, but as the dragon turned, it lashed out its huge tail breaking the warrior's neck.

Hegor swore to avenge his father's death and so went off to the furthest reaches of the land, slaying a great number of dragons, but failing to find the beast that killed his dad.

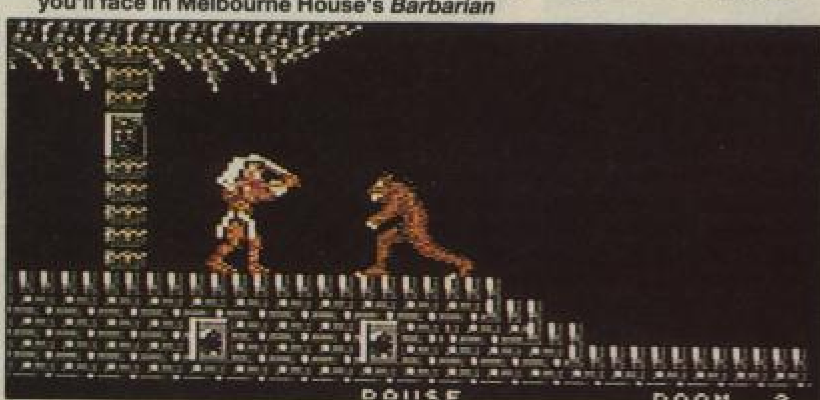
Years later, news reached him of an evil force that terrorised his home village. Returning home quickly, Hegor discovered that the tyrannical lord was Necron, Thoron's brother, who had turned to evil. What's more, one of Necron's subversives was the dragon responsible for Thoron's death.

You take the part of Hegor in the fields at the entrance of the subterranean kingdom. Control is via a strip of icons at the bottom of the screen, causing Hegor to walk,



Hegor, the man with the hairy armpits, isn't exactly my idea of a hunk – plonker would be more appropriate! The excellent, atmospheric graphics which made the 16-bit versions of this game aren't really impressive enough on the 64 to cope with the tedious gameplay. I'm all for hack 'n' slay games when they involve elements of skill or exploration but neither are really required here: once you've sussed a screen all you've got to look forward to is the next. As if that isn't enough, the icon selection system is incredibly awkward and totally redundant. Forget about the snazzy control panel – all I really wanted were good old, traditional joystick controls. If you took away the icons you'd just have something that looks like a very normal, slightly below average slash 'em up – which is exactly what this is.

▼ A kinky monster in a horse-hair body stocking is only one of the dangers you'll face in Melbourne House's *Barbarian*





Psygnosis' classic was one of the first games I ever played on an Atari ST and I was amazed by the incredible atmosphere created by the graphics and sound. The icon control was an original idea and worked surprisingly well once you got used to the layout. However the game did not have a lot of challenge in the gameplay department: it basically boiled down to a simple run-jump-hack-and-collect game. On the 16-bit machines this didn't matter so much, but now that Barbarian has been converted to the 8-bit machines, we find out how much better the presentation made the game seem. The absence of a mouse to control the pointer slows the game down a great deal, often leaving you at the mercy of an oncoming nasty. All the characters and creatures are fairly well designed but not brilliantly animated; the backgrounds are pretty useless and the sound is rubbish. It looks like Melbourne House are simply relying on the reputation of the name to sell the product, because this incarnation is pretty pathetic.

4X4 OFF-ROAD RACING

Epyx, £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk,

Ah, life on the open road! If you've always fancied yourself as a cross-country driver, with oil on your hands, grease in your hair and a tiger in your tank, get your gear and get ready to roll.

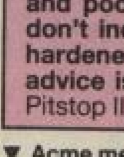
Having chosen a course from four different types of terrain (boggy Georgia mud-flats, two desert tracks or a Michigan winter landscape), you select one of four freaky four-wheelers for the race (try saying that 44 times after a lager shandy.)

Time for a saunter down to the local auto mart and custom shop. Here you can b w all your money on spare parts, fuel, mechanics and extra tyres (not necessary if you look like Gordo) or play safe and just spend a bit.

The race itself has you braving the elements, avoiding obstacles, driving through bogs and negotiating rivers. Symbols on the dashboard give a colour-coded indication of damage sustained by various engine parts. If your vehicle becomes unroadworthy or gets stuck, it stops automatically for repairs. (You did remember to bring the right parts – didn't you?)

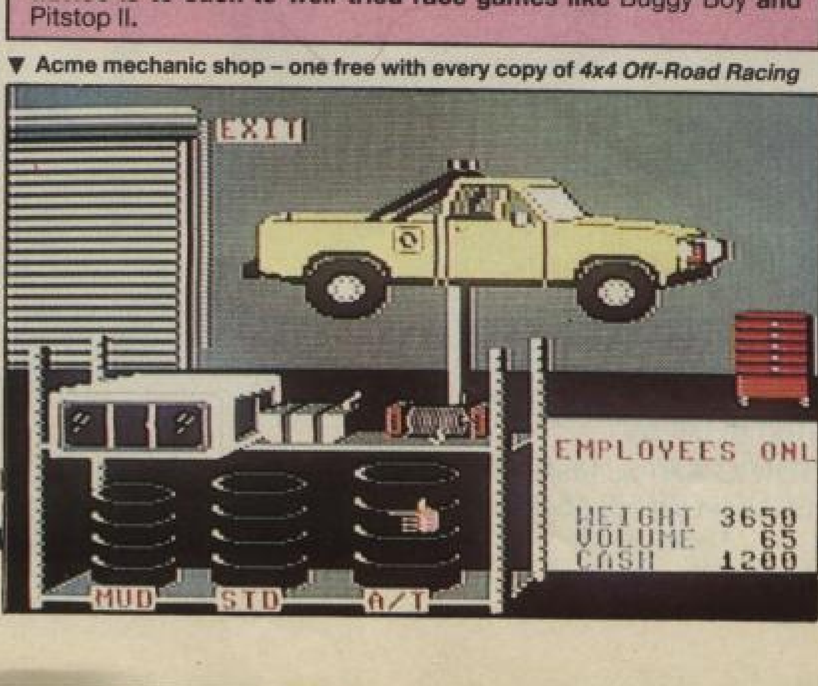
Checkpoints, dotted along the length of each track, are opportunities for repair and refuelling. The longer you stop the more chance there is of other cars passing you.

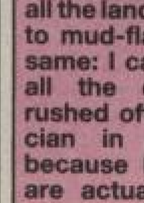
Make it to the finishing line without losing all three of your rigs, getting zapped by the Doombuggy or running out of fuel, and you might just get a foot in the Hall of Fame. And if that isn't worth working for, what is?



The title instantly tells you that this game is trying to emulate the classic Buggy Boy with a few additions to jazz it up. The strategic elements are quite well thought out and presented, but the racing sections are . . . well, poor, to say the least. Epyx have tried to put a few Buggy Boy tricks into 4x4, such as the rolls and two-wheel driving, but unfortunately it hasn't worked too well. The 3D isn't too convincing as there are only a few landscape features to give any effect of perspective. The definition of the cars and other objects isn't too good either, as they're blocky and poorly coloured. This, coupled with the very poor sound don't induce much wish to play the game, and even the most hardened race fans won't be too enthralled. Once again the advice is to stick to well-tried race games like Buggy Boy and Pitstop II.

▼ Acme mechanic shop – one free with every copy of *4x4 Off-Road Racing*





I bet you're all thinking, 'It's an Epyx game so the presentation's got to be good'. And you're absolutely right. It's just that once you've gone cross-eyed trying to decipher the instruction sheet and picked all your extras there isn't that much to it. For a start all the landscapes, from desert to mud-flat, look virtually the same: I can only assume that all the other racers have rushed off to consult an optician in response to this, because hardly any of them are actually on the track. I ended up using the wrong tyres and crashing on purpose just for a bit of variety. Forget about excitement and breathtaking action: the only sharp intake of breath that this simulation could give rise to is a snore.

climb, run, jump and fight. Moving the pointer of the edge of the display causes a further set of icons to appear which control the Barbarian's inventory (picking up and putting down objects). Throughout the maze are monsters and guards which can be killed – either with your trusty sword or other weapons found in the underground rooms.

PRESENTATION 45%
Rubbish front end fiddly pointer control which limits the computer/player interaction.

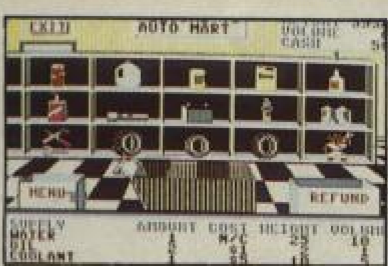
GRAPHICS 39%
Average sprites are poorly coloured and animated and the backgrounds are very ineffective.

SOUND 21%
A few crunches, and that's about it.

HOOKABILITY 46%
As ever, there's the old exploration bug to lure you . . .

LASTABILITY 24%
. . . but that *very* quickly wears off. Basically, the control method ruins a sense of interaction.

OVERALL 31%
The 16-bit's weak gameplay is reinforced by poorly designed 8-bit graphics. A poor conversion.



▲ Vroom, vroom. Or in this case, trundle, trundle

PRESENTATION 84%
Loads of easy-to-use options – an off-road racer's dream.

GRAPHICS 59%
Neatly designed four-wheelers rev up against bland and boring backdrops. The pre-race shots are pretty neat.

SOUND 49%
Front-end ditty plus typical engine drone.

HOOKABILITY 60%
The *idea* captures your interest at first . . .

LASTABILITY 46%
. . . but any initial enthusiasm doesn't last.

OVERALL 56%
A technically competent racing sim spoilt by incredibly laborious gameplay and a total lack of variety.

PINK PANTHER

Gremlin, £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

Da-dum, da-dum, da-dum da-dum da-dum . . . OK, it's not a very good rendition of the *Pink Panther* theme tune but it's the best we can do! Anyway, on with the review . . .



▲ **Red alert, red alert! The Pink Panther is about to clash with the Amazingly Garish Purple Gramophone**

Old Pinky is at a bit of a 'financial disadvantage'. Oh, all right then he's skint! His problem is that he's got long arms and shallow pockets – in other words he likes to spend money. He enjoys luxurious living but doesn't have the means to live the kind of life he enjoys.

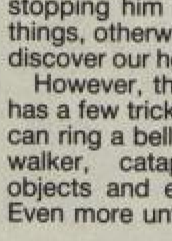
To allay this situation he must find a job. Now what kind of job would net him the most money . . . AHA! That's it! A butler. That way he can . . . er . . . 'help himself' to a few things while the master is asleep. After purchasing the correct items to pass the interview, Pink starts work at the first house. Unfortunately the master is a sleepwalker, so Pink must guide him through the house stopping him from bumping into things, otherwise he'll wake up to discover our hero 'on the rob'.

However, that wily old Panther has a few tricks up his sleeve. He can ring a bell to steer the sleepwalker, catapult him around objects and even inflate things. Even more unfortunately, the law (or *lier* as it is pronounced) don't like his nicking habits and send Inspector Clouseau to try and nab him.

You take the part of the Pink hero during his nocturnal wanderings, trying to keep the sleepwalker from waking up whilst helping yourself to his goodies. Can you steal enough to afford a holiday in the sun? Can you be bothered?

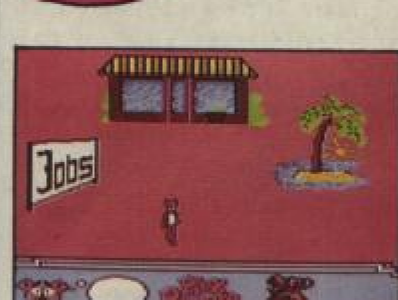


To be honest, the only interesting thing about Pink Panther is the coloured cassette shell! The game itself is tedious beyond belief, with long delays between turns, boring graphics, dirge-like music and frustrating gameplay: it looks like Gremlin have backed a right loser! The main sprite looks a *bit* like the Pink hero he's supposed to depict, but the rest of the graphics are awful, being poorly designed and gruesomely coloured. I don't know *what* the music programmer was on when he did the game theme but I don't think it was this planet. But the gameplay, what about that? Well, 'frustratingly difficult' about sums it up, along with 'very boring'. Oh, by the way, it's cassette-multiload. *Uuueeergh!!!*



Bleuch! If anyone can think of a worse cartoon license than this I'll eat my hat! Ha! Fooled you – I haven't got a hat. And if you think that joke was awful, wait till you see this game. Talk about awkward control methods – you've got about two seconds to perform six split-second moves and if you fail, kaput! Then it's right back to the beginning for one of the most pointless starting sequences ever – wait for it . . . buying a top hat. Good eh? As for the music – really long nails scratching down a blackboard have just about the same effect on my lobes. Still, I've found a foolproof method of winning the game: just bypass the mansion and go straight to the island. The program lets you enjoy your holiday just the same . . .





PRESENTATION 10%
Poor multiload, annoying delays and few options.

GRAPHICS 25%
Average main sprite but everything else is crap.

SOUND 9%
The *Pink Panther* theme has been massacred (sniff).

HOOKABILITY 16%
You do have to look to see what the graphics are like.

LASTABILITY 3%
Play it twice and you'll never play it again.

OVERALL 14%
Aren't gremlins supposed to cock things up? Well they've cocked this up!



ZZAP! TEST

ARMALYTE

Thalamus, £9.99 cassette, £12.99 disk

●**Cyberdyne Systems' graphically brilliant sequel to *Delta***



After the Damocles force destroyed the hostile Hsiffan Khanate, the spacial backwater known as *Delta* became a wasteland littered with disintegrated spacecraft. The few pilots who entered Delta returned with tales of hulks bearing artifacts of tremendous technological advancement.

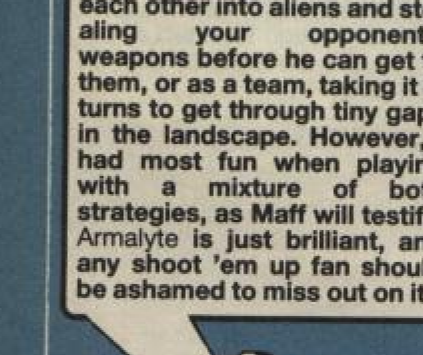
Many disregarded the stories as jokes or legends, but one man believed. After a particularly crippling Stock Market crash, Woodward, the chairman of a Terran mega-corporation sought out the nearest bar where he could drown his sorrows. Three Andromedan Wilt-wines later, he found himself being talked to by a bewhiskered bar-fly whose tongue was obviously oiled with liquor. He was an ex-member of the Damocles force, who was court-martialled and drummed out of the service because of his drinking habits. Yes, he said, he had often been through the Delta and seen the hulks and their treasures, but heavily-armed robot defence systems prevented anyone from looting the ships.

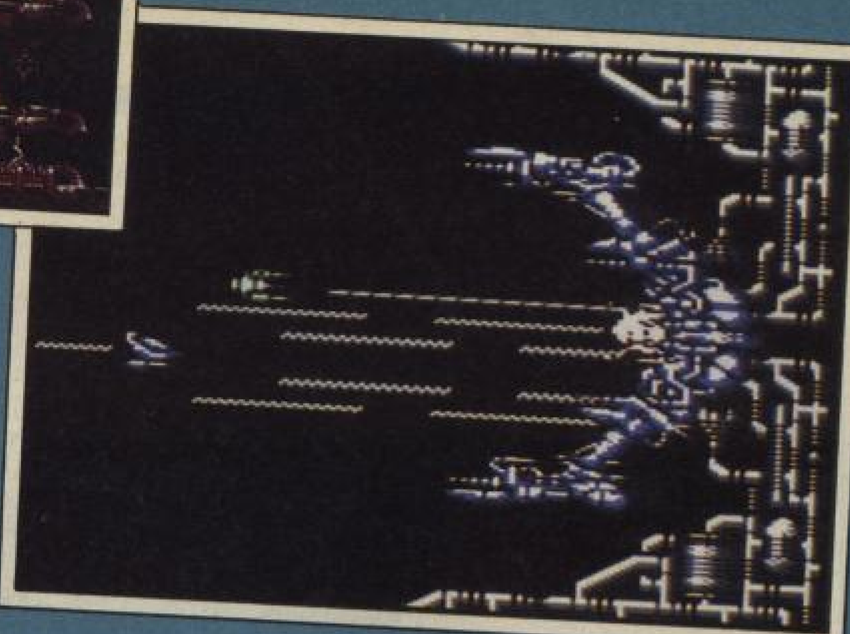
Then the man grinned a drunken grin and drew out a metallic cylinder from inside his oily raincoat. This, he told Woodward, was the only piece of Hsiffan technology anyone had managed to bring out of Delta. Woodward had heard rumours of the treasures, and though the wine had long-since taken effect, he was sober enough to know that this was the key to his company's financial problems. He bought the man a drink: he had a plan that couldn't fail.

Yeah, that's what he told you as well, but now it's your butt up in Delta, flying your tiny fighter into the jaws of eight levels of Hsiffan defences, on your own apart from the highly dubious-looking guy they picked to partner you. You have to admit, these Hsiffies may have been treacherous sons-of-bitches but they sure knew how to build spaceships, and these structures are incredible . . . It's gonna be a shame to blast them to pieces.

And there's bound to be plenty of that – blasting, that is. Woodward had your ships kitted out with the latest in laser armaments and

We've seen some brilliant Commodore blasts of late, but Armalyte **has to take the cake as one of the best to date. Everything about the game is so highly polished that it really does knock the competition into a cocked hat. Graphically,** Armalyte **is staggeringly good, with works of science fiction art for sprites and backdrops. Gameplay meets this high standard and whether playing in single player mode with a remote ship or double player mode, the action is thoroughly exhilarating. In the latter, I particularly liked the way that both players can play either very competitively, bumping each other into aliens and stealing your opponent's weapons before he can get to them, or as a team, taking it in turns to get through tiny gaps in the landscape. However, I had most fun when playing with a mixture of both strategies, as Maff will testify.** Armalyte **is just brilliant, and any shoot 'em up fan should be ashamed to miss out on it.**



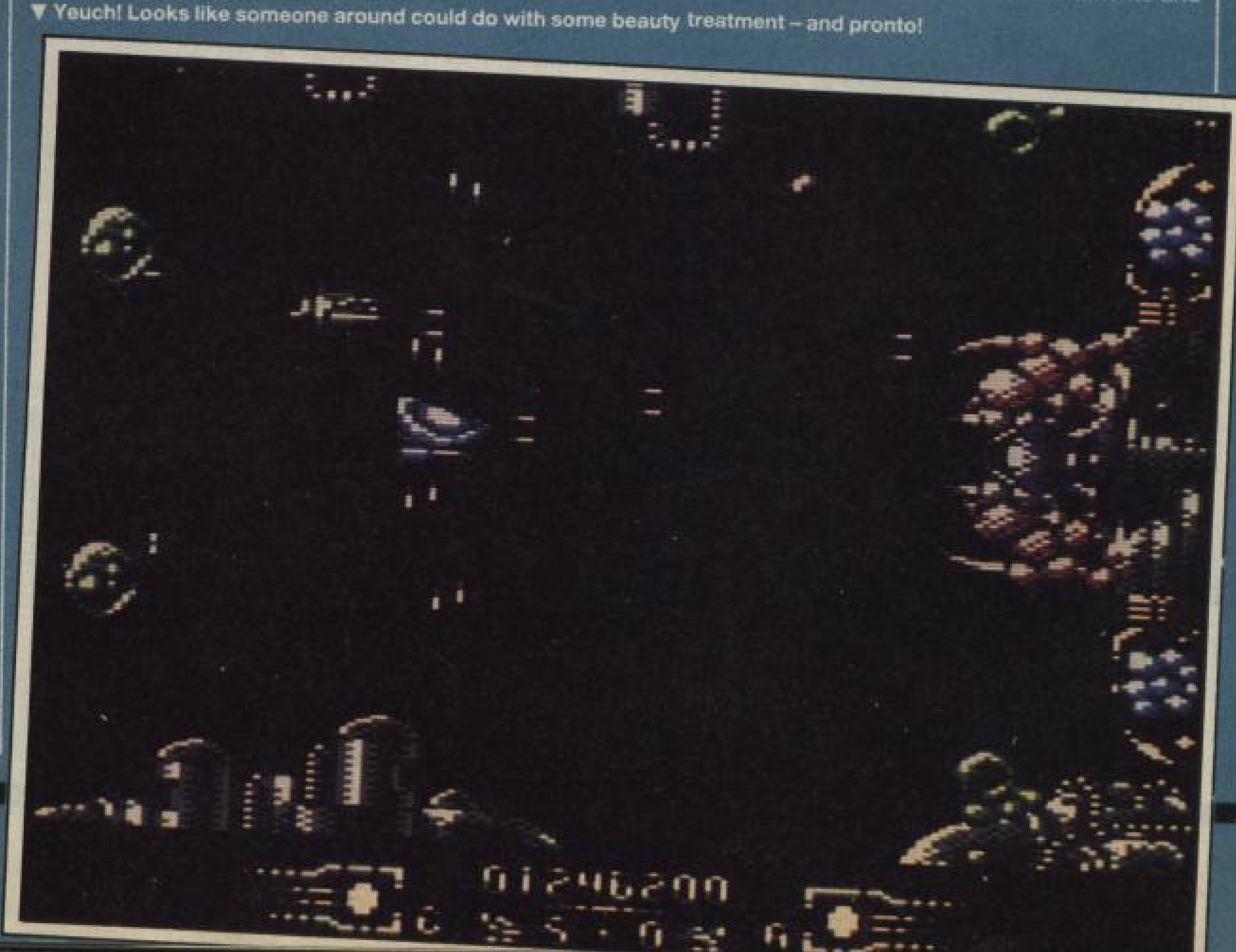


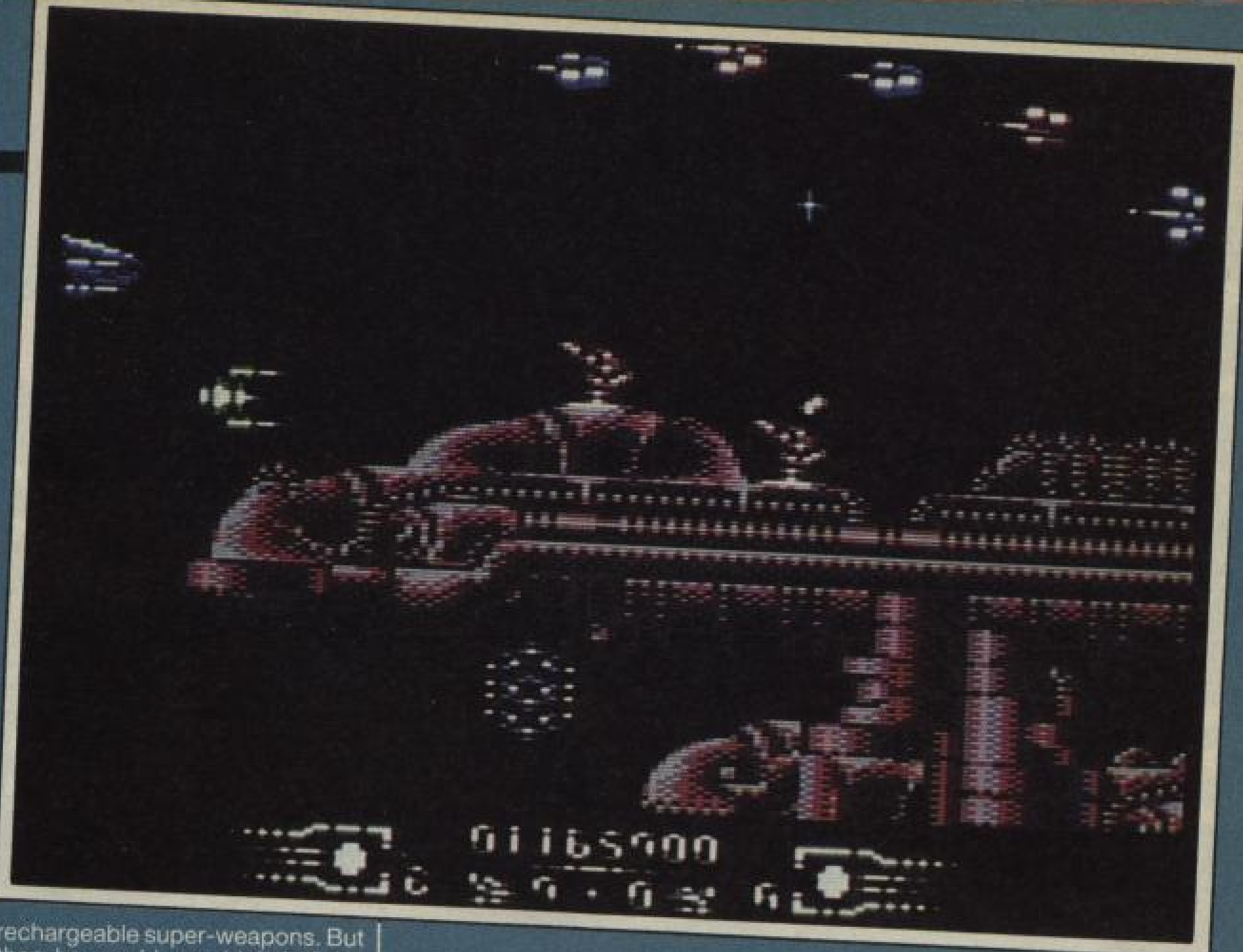
▲ Cor! Plasma beams like chains of solid light – pity you're in the middle of them (hur, hur!)

Well, after saying in the Salamander **review that I thought that** Delta **was the be-all and end-all of progressive shoot 'em ups before Imagine's release, the** Delta **follow-up game arrives on the scene and blows every other game of the type out of the water (well it would if they were in water and not in space).** Armalyte**'s graphics are startlingly good, with perhaps the best use of shading I've seen on any 64 game. The scrolling is smooth, the sprites and backgrounds colourful and the amount of sprites on screen is incredible. Firing the second Superweapon for the first time brought yelps of amazement and enthusiasm from the reviewers as all aliens in the vicinity flew apart (groo). Enough of the graphics, onto the gameplay . . . Well, all I can say is it's brilliant. I'm being as quick as I can to tell you how staggeringly good it is so I can have another go! A huge round of applause and congratulations tp Cyberdyne systems for such a stunning debut. When's the next game due? I can hardly wait, but playing** Armalyte **should help fill the gap!**



▼ Yeuch! Looks like someone around could do with some beauty treatment – and pronto!







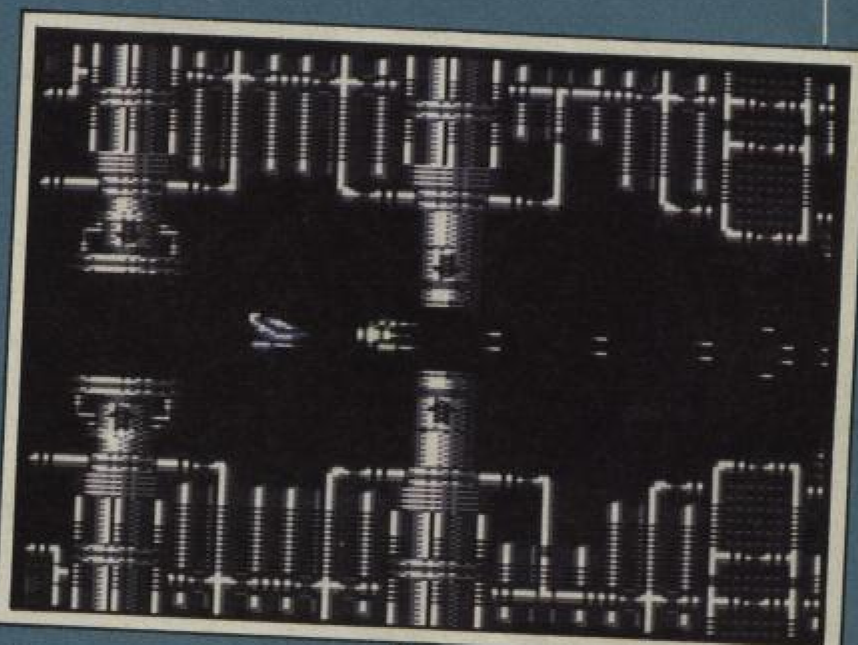
This is incredible! Everything about it is virtually flawless: the graphics are some of the best I've seen on the Commodore, not only for their aesthetic appeal but also for the way they're used on-screen – the combination of threatening metallic space terrain with multicoloured attack patterns creates an amazing feeling of involvement in the intense action. And there are so many aliens on-screen at once – add these to a cluttered landscape and you think you'll never get through alive! If you thought the landscape graphics were good, just wait till you see the end-of-level aliens – some of them are beyond belief! It's packed with superb touches, from the evocative Martin Walker soundtrack to the 'intelligent' in-game aliens; the collision detection is perfect – just generous enough to allow freedom of movement in the tightest gaps. If we'd had this in time for the Def Guide this issue, it would easily have been in the top 5: it's fantastic! I can't praise it highly enough – if you miss Armalyte **you're missing one of the best 64 shoot 'em ups of all time.**

rechargeable super-weapons. But then he would, wouldn't he? He won't make any money if you don't come back.

Hey, what are these crystals hanging in space? Better give 'em a discharge of heavy light . . . wha . . . ? They just transform into bits of machinery when you shoot them . . . Look out you're gonna crash into that one! AAAAAAGH!

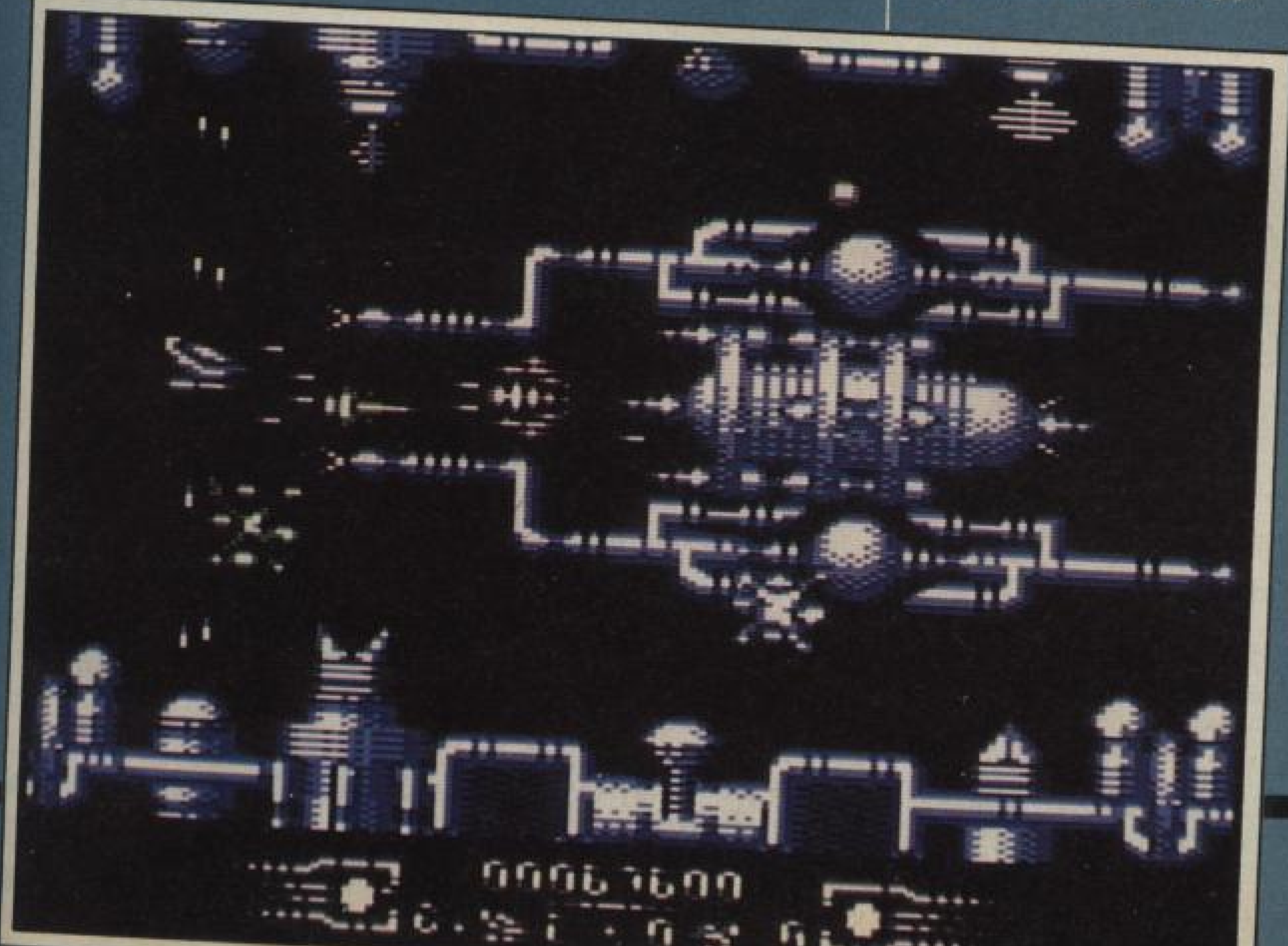
Uh? Nothing happened. Wait, look there it is! It's attached itself to the ship. It's a laser unit, and it's patched into your fire control. Try hitting that next crystal with more shots . . . Now run into it and you've got . . . rear lasers. What else can you get? Vertically firing lasers, triple lasers, converging lasers, and a battery and a generator to recharge the super weapon faster. Try collecting two forward laser units and you get faster fire . . .

This is going to be easier than you thought . . . Or maybe not . . .



▲ Good job you remembered your 18-hour girdle – how else could you squeeze through that gap?

▼ You've got a split-second and its mega-decision time – will you go for the extra weapon or just settle for a speedy exit?



PRESENTATION 91%
Options include two simultaneous players, one player with remote ship, choice of super-weapons, scrolling starfield on/off. Reasonable level multiload and easily-read status displays.

GRAPHICS 98%
Probably the best looking sprites and backdrops ever seen in a Commodore game of this type.

SOUND 81%
Good Martin Walker title screen/loading music and spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 95%
Beautiful graphics and exhilarating blasting action suck you in.

LASTABILITY 93%
Eight lengthy levels to see and the craving for ever larger scores will keep you at it.

OVERALL 97%
A brilliant blaster whose graphics and gameplay knock others for six.



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FOXX FIGHTS BACK

Image Works, £9.99 cassette, £12.99 disk

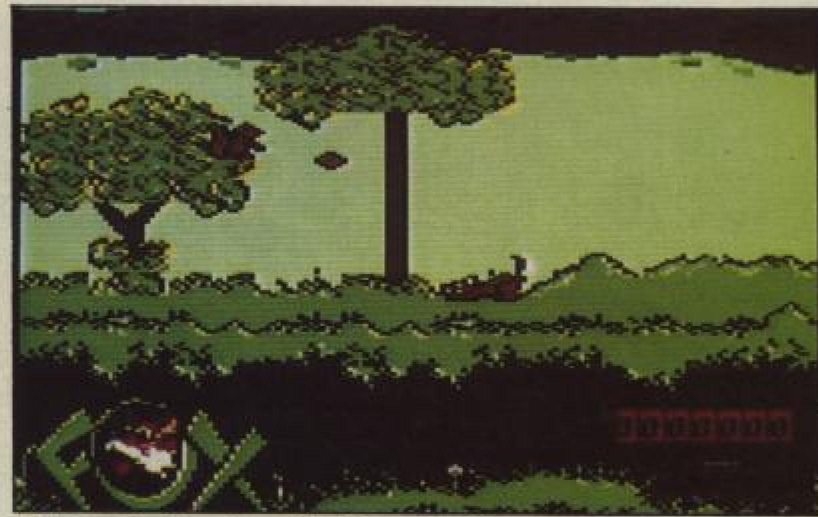
Mr Foxx is really in the dog house. His family has run out of food and his wife has told him it's up to him to restock the larder. Being a lazy so-and-so, Foxx isn't terribly keen on the idea, but a few taps from Mrs Foxx's rolling pin have managed to convince him.

So, after picking up his trusty, er, well, *rusty* pistol off its shelf, Foxx heads off along the scrolling landscape towards Farmer Kilimanjaro's place, fingering the bumps on his head and wondering why he married that old battleaxe in the first place.

Foxx has to take back as many comestibles as he can carry, starting with apples, then moving on to pies and sausages. The apples, naturally enough have to be collected from the orchard inhabited by ferocious squirrels which endanger his pelt by pelting him with nut grenades. Luckily, one thing Foxx is good at is leaping, ducking and running away, and this stands him in pretty good stead with the other perils which come his way. These include gangs of shotgun-toting beagles which ride bicycles (uh?) and chickens which bomb him with deadly cholesterol-packed eggs.

The pistol Foxx starts the game with can only fire slowly and isn't very accurate, so it's a good idea to keep an eye out for something more useful – an M16 machine gun for example. When Foxx gets hit, he loses energy, indicated by a lengthening tongue on the Pantometer at the bottom of the screen.

Luckily for him, Foxx can replenish his energy by entering rabbit warrens or chicken coops and scoffing the sleeping inhabitants. This also clocks up points and can open up short cuts which allow him to get from the farm to his home in next to no time at all and in complete safety.



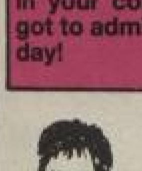
▲ Watch out – there's a nut-hurling squirrel about (well it rhymes, what more do you want?)



▲ The flying foxx performs death-defying acrobatics high above the death-mongering beagles' heads



I can't say I had high hopes for a game which features egg-firing chickens, biking dogs, and a gunshot firing fox, but this is one of those incredibly rare occasions on which I have been forced to admit myself completely and utterly wrong (yeah, yeah, get on with it Kati – Ed). First off, if you're one of those dead serious 'couldn't understand a joke if you stood in one' sort of people, start reading another review: chasing poultry, belting hares and hitting Hell's beagles right between the eyes won't be your idea of fun. It is mine though – especially when you've got really brilliantly animated graphics and mindlessly silly music to back it up. OK, so this might not last as long as some of the games in your collection but you've got to admit: every fox has his day!



I haven't had so much fun on a 64 game since Star Paws! Anyone who can watch the Hell's beagles cycling after our hero with their ears flapping wildly in the wind and not laugh must have no sense of humour at all. The graphics aren't incredible, but they're very cartoony and convey just the right atmosphere as you exact your revenge on dogs and chickens. The fox himself is neatly animated as he switches from a normal, everyday running animal to a gun-toting, bloodthirsty monster. There's the usual arcade adventure stuff – jumping wide gaps, collecting things, avoiding enemies – but the way it's presented (packed with neat touches like the pantometer) make this one stand out from the crowd.



Within two minutes of Foxx Fights Back's arrival in the office people were coming down from the Art department just to get a look at the graphics. Even if you went down your local joke shop with the express purpose of buying a gorilla suit, you'd be hard-pressed to find anything sillier than bike-riding beagles and chickens flying around doing . . . well, what chickens do. The sound perfectly complements the arcade action and the collect 'em up gameplay with all its short cuts and burrows to explore, is just good old fashioned fun. If you buy it tomorrow, you probably won't be playing it next year, but who cares about lastability when you've got a whole farmyard of animals to beat up now? Grrr!

PRESENTATION 79%
Clever pantometer energy gauge is typical of the humorous touches throughout.

GRAPHICS 82%
Jolly, cartoony sprites and nicely scrolling rural backdrops.

SOUND 74%
Mindless medley of perfectly frantic tunes.

HOOKABILITY 81%
Humorous gameplay and a cracking pace make the game fun from the outset.

LASTABILITY 71%
Not much variation, but bound to remain enjoyable for many plays.

OVERALL 79%
An unusual, but entertaining variation on the arcade adventure theme.


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SIZZLER

ZZAP! TEST

EMLYN HUGHES INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

Audiogenic, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk

●Realistic and compelling action in the best footy sim available

'Y'know Saint, we seem ter be makin' more an' more appearances in computer magazines these days.'

'Ha ha . . . Aye, ye're right there Greavsie – there seems to be a new computer football game on the market every week! Whose name's on this one, then?'

'EEEEEYYYH! COME ON TEEEEAM!!!'

'Oh, him . . . '

Audiogenic's game of football, Crazy Horse style, begins on an opening screen containing four pull-down menus. From these you can do the usual football game feats such as choosing one of ten skill levels as well as strip and pitch colours, but you can also select and edit teams and individual player skills (such as speed). Satisfactory squads can be saved to tape or disk for future use.

The menus also bestow certain abilities on the players, such as back-heels and five direction kicking, all of which are accessed from the joystick during a game. A practice option lets you familiarise yourself with joystick skills by pitting you against a team whose members freeze whenever they get the ball.

As well as these facilities, you can play cup, league, championship, season or friendly matches, and show or even print out fixture and results lists. Up to four players can play in competitions, two playing together as a team against a computer squad.

Once you've configured the game to play the match of your dreams, it's time to kick off. During play, the standard scrolling grandstand view of the action is shown with a display above the pitch to indicate the name of the team member under each player's control. The computer puts the player nearest the ball under joystick control, but an option exists to allow you to select the controlled player from the joystick.

As you might expect, the game's authenticity extends to the objective being to score more goals than the opposition before the final whistle blows.



When you first see someone playing this, you'd be forgiven for thinking it was Commodore's age-old International Soccer, **but EHIS' graphical crudeness belies its sophisticated gameplay. An absolute wealth of options makes the game incredibly flexible and ensures that boredom won't set in for a long time. Unlike certain other computer football sims, it isn't slowed down by its extra features and doesn't need tiny gauges to display kick strength, etc. The joystick control is very easily mastered after a few practice games and you're soon dazzling the crowd with back-heels, sliding tackles and diving headers. I'm really looking forward to Sensible Software's** Micro Soccer, **but it's going to have a hard time beating this!**





I used to think that International Soccer **was the be-all and end-all of footy games, but EHIS wipes the floor both with it and** Match-day II **for sheer playability. Ignore the graphics – they're not brilliant, as you can see from the screenshots – and ignore the sparse sound effects which, even when they do appear, are fairly tuneless – the action is fantastic! All kinds of moves are available to you, and when you hit the post or score a goal, you real feel the thrill of having done it! Had the graphics and sound been a bit more polished, I'd have been tempted to give this a Gold Medal, because it's easily the best soccer sim available on the 64. The ball movement in particular is incredibly realistic: deflections from posts and opposing players, chips and headers are almost like watching the real thing! I've no hesitation in recommending it to any soccer fan, because it's nothing short of superb.**

The best thing about this game is that you can play it at almost any level. If you're not feeling particularly strategic, you can just hit practice option and go straight into a match. On the other hand, if you're into really serious footy confrontations then you can spend ages selecting exactly the right options from one of the most comprehensive menu systems I've ever seen. It's not just the presentation that's outstanding – the gameplay is incredibly easy to get into and has obviously been really carefully designed. Even the sound, to which (to be kind) they haven't exactly devoted lashings of memory, contributes to the atmosphere. It's great to hear the crowd gasping when you almost get a goal! With all the cheapo football simulations that have recently been flooding the market, it comes as a welcome change to discover a really professional game.

PRESENTATION 98%
A vast array of options allow you to reconfigure the game to the nth degree.

GRAPHICS 79%
Very fast and smooth, but all the graphics lack definition. The relatively high mark is due to this speed, coupled with the realistic ball movement.

SOUND 28%
Good crowd cheers and air-horn noises but nothing more.

HOOKABILITY 88%
Some practice is required to master ballplay, but the difficulty selections make it easy to acquire the necessary skills.

LASTABILITY 96%
The game's enormous flexibility will hold your interest for ages.

OVERALL 90%
Quite simply, the best football simulation available for the 64!

▼ More options, features, extras and shots than Emlyn has designer jumpers – and that's *a lot!*



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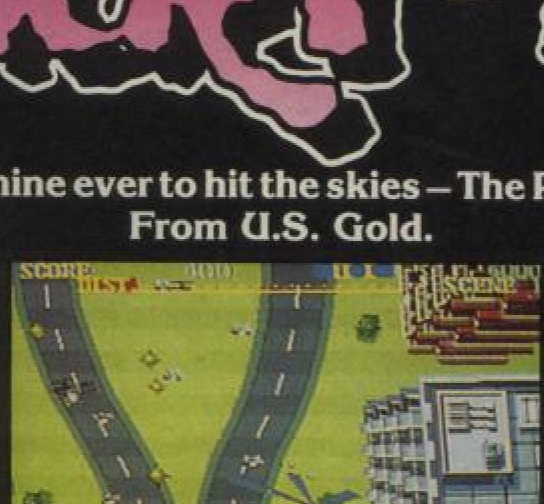
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ZZAP! CHUCK VOMIT



Munch, munch, munch, BURP! I s'pose all you wimpy gristleguts were expecting that namby pamby, pustulent parp, that jumpy, jaundiced jellyfish, that half-baked, half-human husk of a Harlequin to enter here . . .

HA! But he didn't, did he? So where is he then, eh? where is he?

He's disappeared, he has – disappeared to the depths of a green and slimy bowel. And it serves the multicoloured monkey- man right. Anyone worth their weight in billy-goats knows there's a lovely great stinking troll's hole under Ludlow bridge – so he picked the wrong place to go looking for *weedy* monsters, didn't he?

Well, old purple pants dropped in just in time for lunch – a nasty, gristly, bony, after dinner Twiglet thing he was as well – not so bad when I'd tried him in a bit of thistle stew . . . nice and rancid . . . almost as tender as a billy-goat in leather underpants roasting on a rusty spit . . .

That horrible hairless Harlequin turned out to have a lot of useful thingies in his ▶

sticky Andy Pandy suit: a Lord Of The Rings solution (ha! solved that *ages* ago), a couple of tasty, scaly-bum lizards and a fancy letter from some blubbery-bottomed, big-bellied Houghton bloke.

That's when the penny dropped! If that was ZZAP!'s Harlequin then there was a job going spare up at King Street – my chance to show the world what a clever hintellectual troll I am. Ten seconds later and I'm grasping grubworm Gordo by his smelly earlobes. 'Gimme the job or else'. Threatened by a gobbet of my slimiest and most acidic spit, he's no option but to agree. A bit of extra special squeezing and that fat excuse for an editor coughs up an Amiga as well – which is a bonus, as so far those puny 64 programmers have been too scared to send anything down to my hole.

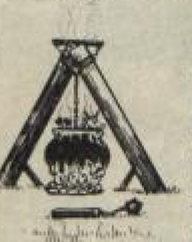
Right, so now the bloke in charge is me – Chuck Vomit the Troll – and if any of you squeaking sticklebacked adventurers starts whingeing about stinking billy-goats gruff or thinks its funny to go around slobbering phrases like 'trip trap, trip trap', you'll get wrapped round a steaming spit, skinned upside down and



stuck sideways in a bucket of rotting troll-snot . . . Billy-goats . . . Bah!

FAERY TALE ADVENTURE

Mediagenic/Microillusions, Amiga £29.99



Are you sitting comfortably? Wiped your noses? Rubbed away that nasty crufflenut? Then I'll begin. Once upon a time when the fields and rivers were uninhabited, and trolls could stomp on anyone they found, one Master at Arms decided to go and spoil it all.

Somehow the talisman that had protected his village and his three sons (Julian, Phillip and Kevin) had got 'lost' and goblins, ghosts and skeletons were beginning to take over the town. It was going to be a real riot of a party – corpses and mediums, there was even talk of billy-goat pie – but the tight-lipped old codger poured cold water on the whole thing and insisted on going for help.

Not that he's quite as smart as he makes out. He comes back with a death wound and a garbled story: an evil Necromancer is threatening to destroy the land and unless someone manages to perform seven consecutive quests, he'll never be defeated.

Any sensible lad would think twice before going on an adventure like that. Unfortunately, Julian, Phillip and Kevin have all had a touch too much of the sun, so they *all* want to go. Julian sets off first.

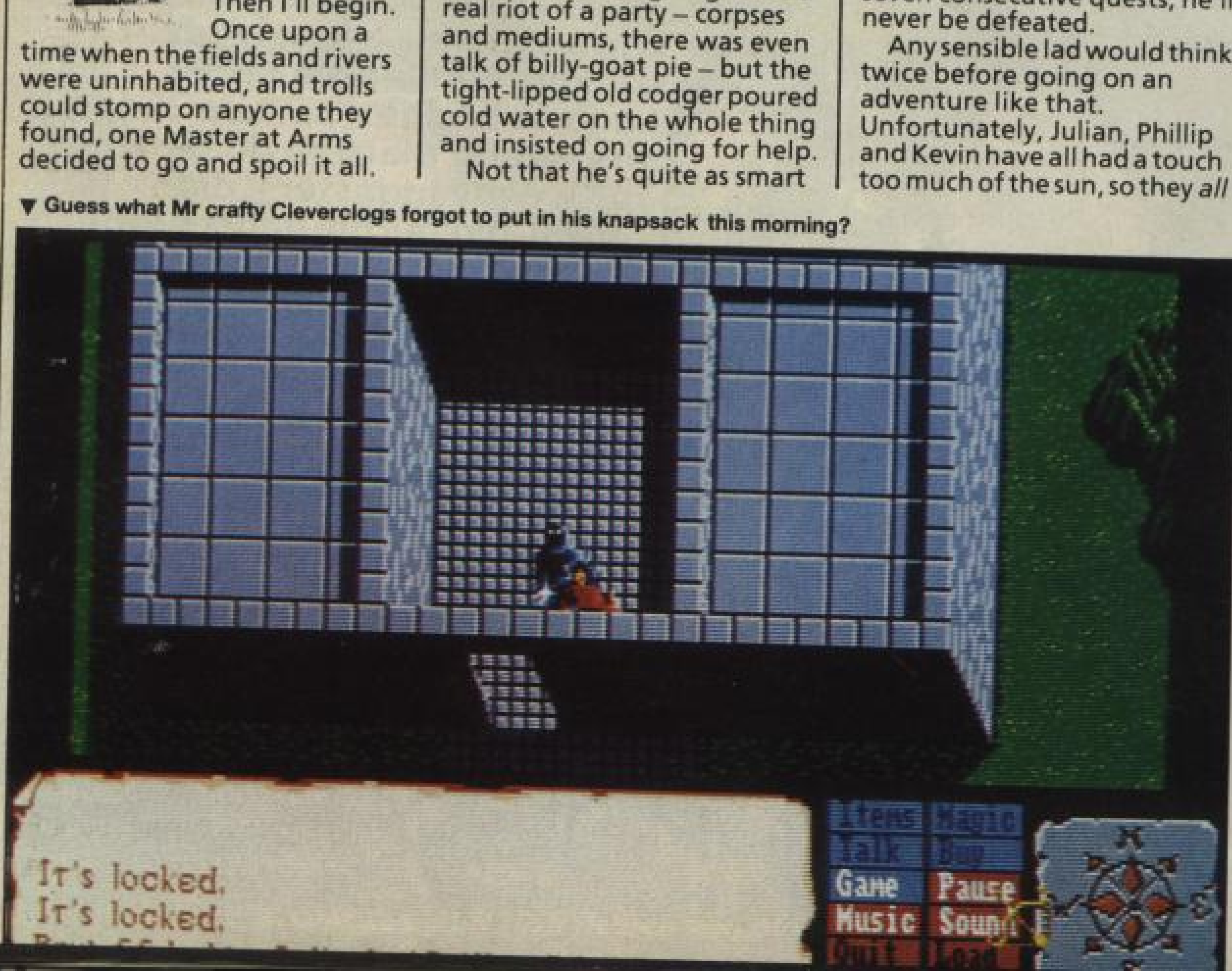
This is a graphical adventure (relying on the mouse) so a lot of Jazza's journey from home through the surrounding fields, forests and countryside, is spent fighting goblins or

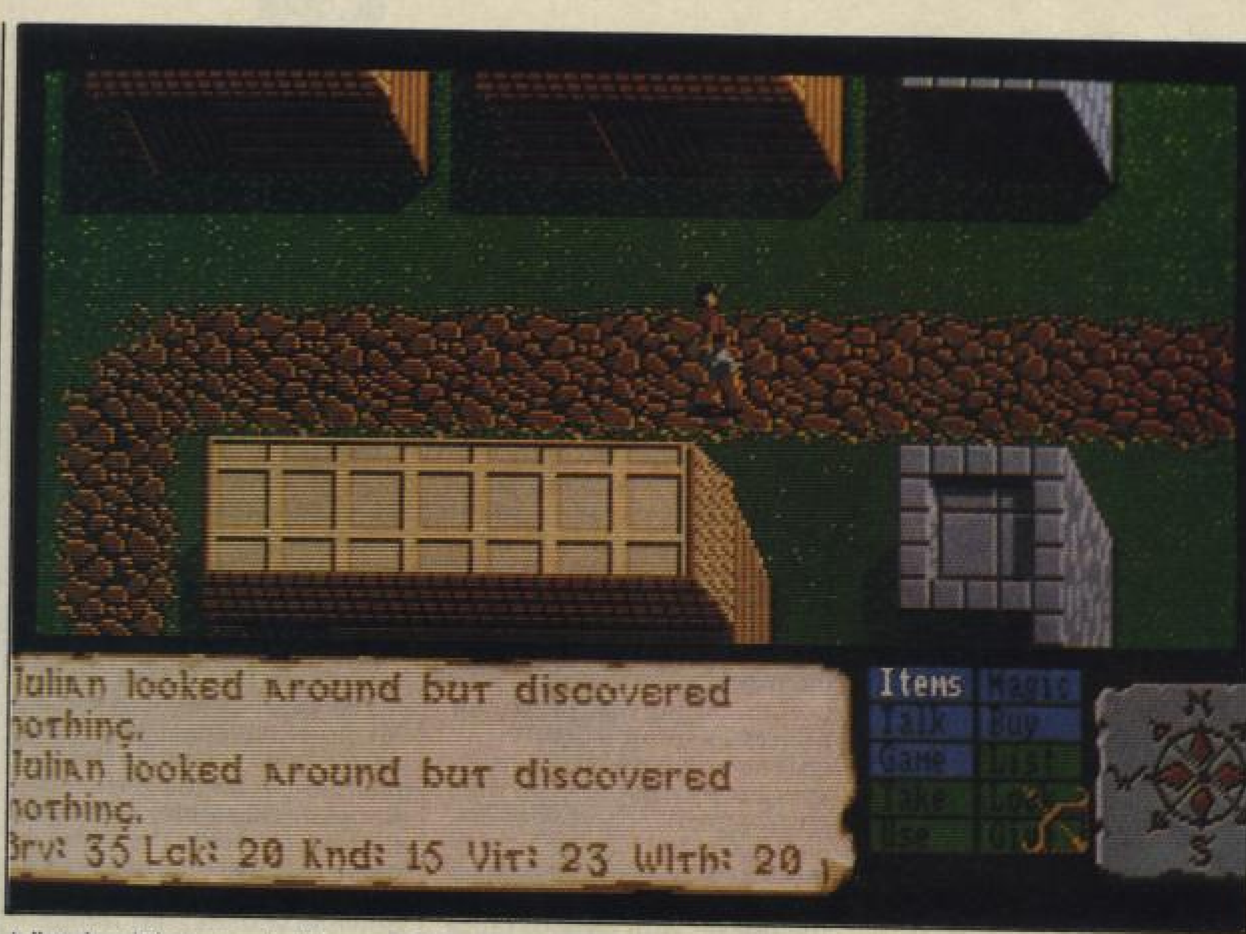


running away (told you he was a spoilsport). As ghosts and goblins are a lot more efficient in battle than some snotty-nosed kid, you probably won't get very far at first. Once you've notched up a few skulls though, you can start using some of the magic objects lying around, rummaging in boxes, spending money and casting spells – you know, abracadabra, shazam, minzaguinness . . .

The menu doesn't let you perform anywhere near as many actions as a text-input adventure but you can still talk to people, trade with them,

▼ Guess what Mr crafty Cleverclogs forgot to put in his knapsack this morning?





▲ I've already been round all the rest of the village – where else am I supposed to look?

look for hidden objects and unlock doors. These put obvious limitations on the puzzle factor (what are you supposed to do without an EXAMINE icon?) so in the end most of the fun comes from the sound effects – bogey-ing down to the music – and the graphics: you can even see the bubbles when somebody drowns. Ah, Lunch.

If you like your adventures like your billy-goat (well-done and meaty) you might get a bit fed up of all this sightseeing. On the other hand, if you're patient, fancy yourself as a bit of a fighting machine (boy, you must have some imagination) and like making maps, you might want to give it a go. Question is – should any adventure really cost £29.99?

Don't ask me – mine was free.

ATMOSPHERE	**85%**
PUZZLE FACTOR	**71%**
INTERACTION	**65%**
LASTABILITY	**73%**
OVERALL	**76%**



▲ Santa, are you really up there?



▲ Mediagenic's *Faery Tale Adventure*: taking a leaf out of storybooks

TANGLEWOOD

Microdeal, Amiga £19.95



Aa! Here's something you didn't know: you've got an uncle called Arthur. He's not from *East Enders* and he doesn't have a mate called Terry but he does own the the mining rights to T'ngl–y–wd. Spit in my eye, eh? Isn't the world a small place guv'nor?

Well, yeah, it is a small place and that's why T'ngl-y-wd isn't on it – actually. It's 'a small, undistinguished planet in a remote galaxy'. Arthur didn't worry about it much until he found out that it contained some pretty valuable stones, then he shot his mouth off over a couple of pints of beer and was elbowed out by the mining company. Yup, those nice men at the mining centre have hidden Arthur's documents and re-established the planet's operational base. There's a court case in ten days and Arthur (sounds a bit like my uncle, Ripperbile) needs to find those papers or he's out on his ear.

Now, who could he find to help him out?

Personally, I think he could have chosen someone a bit more macho than a freckly, skinny computer freak like you, but beggars can't be choosers and anyway – Arthur wants you for your brain.

You start your mission in front of a computer console which gives you control over five of Arthur's clapped-out droids. Most of them have bits missing and they're liable to break down but at least they all work . . . well, sort of. Different droids are suited to different types of terrain and some can be equipped with extra data if you find it.

You direct the robots' movements via a viewing screen. Remote control enables you to instruct them to pick up, search and use helpful objects like batteries or magenta coins. Provided they've got the right equipment they can enter phone booths, answer the phone, explore buildings and, ultimately, the control centre itself.

This is definitely an arcade-style adventure weighted towards the arcade. *You* might find the puzzles pretty devious (they've got to be really hard to fool Chuck Vomit) but it's all a question of having the right thing at the right time. Trouble is, the right place doesn't turn up very often and you can spend ages just chivvying droids round a pretty boring landscape, wasting power. The sound (chug chug chug, chug chug chug) isn't much more exciting either – and I'm a great Bay City Rollers fan so I know what good music's all about.

If you like your adventures grilled and ready to eat you ▶



▲ Microdeal's *Tanglewood*: a game barely approaching average appeal for homicidal Trolls

probably won't find Tanglewood instantly appealing. You could spend ages exploring this deep and mysterious world – there must be some juicy titbits somewhere – but it takes so long to get anywhere that you might decide to throw your disk over the nearest bridge and cut your toenails instead.

But watch out – you might start enjoying yourself!

ATMOSPHERE	**50%**
PUZZLE FACTOR	**51%**
INTERACTION	**42%**
LASTABILITY	**45%**
OVERALL	**49%**

THE BARD'S TALE II

Electronic Arts/Interplay, Amiga £24.95



I know some really good words (slimegobbet, snotglobule, greasebum, cockaleekee . . . er . . .) but how about shouting 'death and drek' next time you've got a goblin by the throat? Brill, eh? You can do it all the time if you play *Bard's Tale II*. I really like those olde worlde expressions – it appeals to my intellectual soul. Death and drek, death and drek, death and drek . . .

Now, pull your fingers out of your noses and try to cast your mind back to *Bard's Tale I*. Remember liberating Skara Brae? Well now, instead of enjoying your well-earned rest billy-goat hunting, you're supposed to be doing the same for Tangramayne. Some evil geezer called Lagoth Zanta has stolen the peace-keeping Destiny Wand, broken it into seven pieces and hidden the different parts in the middle of a Snare of Death (dungeon puzzle room to you, idiot).

As usual you can make a team of up to seven grade 1 (ie. puny) adventurers including a bard (not that he sings any real music – not one David Cassidy hit) or use a team saved from *Bard's Tale One*. As they hack their way through more and more villains (luckily for Interplay, I didn't find any trolls or there would have been trouble) their experience points increase and they gradually improve their character ratings.

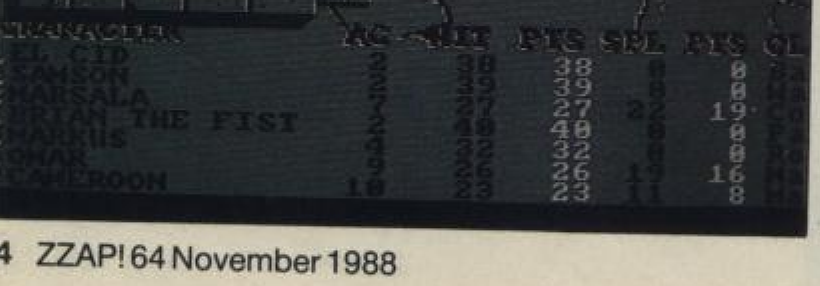
The playing area is about twice the size of the original game, with extra dungeons, six cities, castles and forests to explore, but what really distinguishes this tale from its predecessor is the addition of the puzzle element to all the usual hack 'n' slay. Using the mouse (much easier than all that key pressing) you can spend ages lumbering around discovering secret magic portals, casting spells, rescuing princesses, using teleport systems and generally leaving your slimey pawprints on the environment. People with an above average IQ like mine should enjoy all these extras – anyone else should cover themselves with tabasco sauce and jump off the nearest bridge.

If you're stupid enough to let one of your party die, then you can always try paying for a resurrection at the nearest temple. On the other hand, you could always save your money and blow it all at Garth's Equipment Shoppe – he does a very nice line in daggers . . .

Considering they're confined to the top left hand corner of the screen, the graphics are pretty impressive. Most of the villains and monsters are animated, there's plenty of colour and a flame actually appears when torches are lit. Not bad, huh? I bet you think they could have done a lot with the sound as well, don't you? Well, you're absolutely wrong because, apart from a medieval title dirge there isn't any. Nope, not a single smidgeon, a squeak or a squirt anywhere. I had to put on my MUD greatest hits LP just to cheer me up.

The Bard's Tale II is probably the best role-playing game you can get – so far – for the Amiga. It's very well-presented and a lot more challenging than *The Bard's Tale I* and while the plans for an Amiga version of *Dungeon Master* have been shelved, probably the only game that will improve on it is *The Bard's Tale III*. So – loaf on down to your nearest Amiga stockist and get it.

▼ Face to face with a deadly Wood Sprite! Time for a song?



ATMOSPHERE	**77%**
PUZZLE FACTOR	**74%**
INTERACTION	**70%**
LASTABILITY	**84%**
OVERALL	**80%**

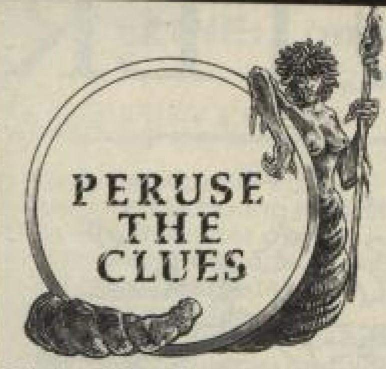


LORD OF THE RINGS

MELBOURNE HOUSE

SOLID SOLUTIONS

Last month Harly left you standing at the gates of Bree with all your mates. Go back to Tom Bombadil's house (NW, S, W). Give a sword to each of your friends and get ready to move into the town of Bree. Make sure that they're following first and then move N and SE twice to reach the gate. Knock to alert the gatekeeper. When he asks you to identify yourself, type in SAY TO KEEPER 'UNDERHILL', not Frodo, whatever you do. You should now be able to pass through the



With a bit of help from some clever clogs Paul Hardy and Jonathon Dale (not that I needed it), here's a few hints to keep you going.

TOWER OF DESPAIR: If Malnor's scream rings painfully in your ears, cover them. Join the rods, then insert them. If the orb's too hot to hold get it with a gauntletted hand. You can only jump the chasm once! To pass the Demons at the beginning go to the courtyard, mount the stallion and go east until you outrun them.

HOBBIT: Tell Bard to shoot the dragon.

WEREWOLF SIMULATOR: In the hall of records, SEARCH UNDER Jones, Morris and Doyle. In the library, ask the librarian about werewolves. SEARCH BOOK until you find an interesting one to read.

DEMON FROM THE DARKSIDE: Kill the Red Dragon with the Sword of Truth. Give Cerberus the bone. At the bottom of the stairs EXAMINE STAIRS, BREAK STAIRS, GO HOLE. Carry Wise and the lit torch in the room of darkness. Herne wants his horn back – it's the one you used to summon Charon the ferryman. Outside the oak door you need some HELP.

TEMPLE OF TERROR: Move the rock to enter the temple. Use the spoon to prise the lid off the paint pot. Use the paint to paint the glass cover to make a mirror. Use the mirror to deflect the forcefield.

ZORK 1: Carry the garlic to get past the vampire bat and pray at the altar to get the coffin out. Wave the sceptre at the falls. Give the egg to the thief to open it. To get the brass bauble take the clockwork canary to the forest and wind it up.

ZORK 2: To open the door in the tiny room, put the mat under the door and open the key hole. Put the letter opener in the lock. Get the mat. To get the candy in the team room, get all of the cakes. Eat the green cake and go east. Throw the red cake at the pool and get the candies. Go to the west and eat the blue cake.

ZORK 3: Give the bread to the Old Man in the Engravings Cave. To cross the lake with the lamp, put it in the chest and close it. The table in the Scenic Vista changes number – touch it to be transported.

RED MOON: To get rid of the watchdog, put the pills into the meat and feed it to him. To cross the line, rub it out. Drop the lump of chalk into the acid.

gate into the cobbled square of Bree.

The three doors leading away from here need to be treated very carefully. Don't go North, because that takes you straight into the arms of the Black Riders plotting your untimely end. If you feel a bit peckish you could make your way South to the General Store for provisions but that isn't absolutely necessary.

The Yellow Door to the West leads to the Long Low Room otherwise known as Barliman's Tavern. When the landlord asks your name, answer Underhill. Explore the room to the West. When you return to the bar, Barliman gives you a letter. It informs you that Gandalf won't be able to make it (sob, sob!).

But what's this? There's a stranger in the room. Say hello, then. Listen carefully to what Strider says and when he asks you to follow him wait twice before taking the meal and going East.

Follow Strider all over until you get to the Bare Hilltop. There's a flat stone here with a message from Gandalf.

When Strider stops along the Broad Paved Road, it's time to deal with the Black Riders. And no, I'm not going to tell you what to do then. If you can't work it out for yourself, you'll just have to wait for next month's instalment, won't you?



I found this list scrunched up in Harly's damp back pocket along with a couple of cute and juicy ferrets – they won't last long.

Don't even think about ringing someone in the middle of the night – a pale adventurer dipped in tabasco sauce makes a tasty midnight snack. If you're writing, remember to include an SAE – unless you want to get Chucked off a bridge.

Heroes of Karn, Bored of the Rings, Gremlins, Voodoo Castle, Zim Zala Bim, Mugsy's Revenge, Tropical Adventure, Dracula, Holy Grail, The Pawn, Return to Oz, Masters of the Universe, Robin of Sherwood, Fourth Protocol, Price of Magik.
Christophe Brassart, 67 rue de l'Abbe Lemire, 59200 TOURCOING, France.

Tower of Despair, Dracula, Adventureland, Zim Zala Bim, Castle of Terror, Time Tunnel, Eureka.
John Paterson, 8 Bracadale Road, Baillieston, Glasgow G69 Tel: 041 771 7729

Mordons Quest, Spiderman, Hacker
Nigel 'Nemesis' Richardson Tel: 01 360 8325

The Golden Baton, Worm in Paradise, Hobbit, Fourth Protocol (Pt 3 only).
Andrew Blackman, 133 Ashen Drive, Dartford, Kent DA1 3LY. Tel: 0322 76887 5.30-8.30pm

Dungeon Adventure, Lord of the Rings, Quest for the Holy Grail, Hampstead, Lords of Time, Inca Curse, Espionage Island, Planet of Death
David Lemon, 14 Norton Place, Dunfermline, Fife KY11 4RH Tel: 0383 728353 after 6pm Mon-Fri

Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Zork III, Terrormolinos, Never Ending Story, Heroes of Karn, Mission 1, Gremlins, Robin of Sherwood
Ron McKenzie, 3 Silverstream, Freystrop, Haverfordwest, Dyfed SA61 2SN

Adventureland, SubSunk, Heroes of Karn, Empire of Karn, Munroe Manor, Hacker, Classic Adventure, All early Infocom titles, Jinxter, Guild Of Thieves, Plundered Hearts, Dracula, Hitchhiker's Guide, Mindshadow, Tracer Sanction, Wishbringer, Trinity, The Pawn.
Chris Fleming, 235 Meola Road, Pt Chev, Auckland, N Zealand. Tel: 867074

Voodoo Castle, Heroes of Karn, Pirate Adventure, Ten Little Indians, Hobbit, Lost City, Gremlins, Wizard of Akyrz, Quest for the Holy Grail, Zim Sala bim, Island Adventure, Castle Dracula.
Paul Flanagan, 6 Corry, Belleek, Co Fermanagh, N Ireland. Tel: 036565 594

The Hobbit, Erik the Viking, Castle of Terror, Eureka, Voodoo Castle, The Count, Heroes of Karn, Empire of Karn, Zork I, Zork III, Exodus, Ultima III, The Boggit, Lords of Time, Never ending story, The Hulk, Temple of Terror, Ultima IV, Seabase Delta, Kentilla, Valkyrie 17, Sherlock, The fourth protocol, The Helm, Wizard of Akyrz, Perseus and Andromeda, Lord of the rings (part 1), Emerald Isle, Quest for the Holy Grail, Hacker, Colossal Cave.
Steven Kelly, 4 South View, Whins Lane, Simonstone, Burnley, Lancs BB12 7QU. Tel: 0282 74765 (between 6pm and 10 pm)

The Hobbit, Seabase Delta, Kentilla, Zzzz, Spytrek, Robo City, Imagination, Demon Knight, Kobyashi Naru, Tower of Despair, Time Tunnel, Citadel of Chaos, Eureka, Sorceror of Claymorgue Castle, The Quest For The Holy Grail, Rigel's Revenge, See-ka of Assiah (part one), Football Frenzy, Velnor's Lair
Paul Hardy, 33 Fir Tree drive, Wales, Sheffield S31 8LZ.

Hitchhiker's Guide, Zork I, Zork II, Planetfall, Leather Goddesses, Cutthroats, Infidel, Stationfall.
Dave Rogers, 15 Elm Terrace, Westfield, Radstock, Bath, Avon BA3 3XP.

Amazon, Borrowed Time, Castle of Terror, Castle Adventure, Computer Adventure, Dracula part 1, Grand Larceny, Haunted House, Himalayan Adventure, Labyrinth, Mad Mummy, Mindshadow, Murder on the Waterfront, Never ending story, Ninja, Raka-tua Volcano, Scroll of Akhbar, Seabase Delta, Silver Mountain, Subsunk, The Boggit, The Dallas quest, The Hobbit, Ultima IV, Voodoo Castle, Zork I, Zork II, Zork III, Zzzz.
Mario Moeller, 38 Greenvale Drive, Greenvale, 3047, Vic. Australia.

Ultima IV, The Bard's Tale, Voodoo Castle, Phantasie I, Never Ending Story, Dracula, The Prince of Magic, Borrowed Time, The Pawn, Seabase Delta, Deadline, Zork III, Wishbringer.
Derek Wong, 42 Ingram Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR4 8EB.

Hitchhiker's Guide, The Hobbit, Lord of the Rings, The Shadows of Mordor, Guild of Thieves, Jinxter.
Warren Lee Melia, 1 Thornhill Avenue, Rishton, Blackburn, Lancs, BB1 4EZ.

Castle of Terror, The Hobbit, The Hulk, Mindshadow, Holy Grail, Redhawk, Snowball, Subsunk, Twin Kingdom Valley, Voodoo Castle.
Jeff Gillan, 50 Tynedale Crescent, Penshaw, Houghton–Le–Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 7RP.

Jack The Ripper, Dracula, Kayleth, Mindshadow, Never Ending story.
Derek Scott, St. Peter's College, Saltley, Birmingham, B8 3TE.

Starcross, Suspended, Suspect, Leather Goddesses, Zork I, Zork II, Zork III, Deadline, Planetfall, Infidel, Cutthroats, Ballyhoo, Lurking Horror, Seastalker, Bureaucracy, Trinity, Moonmist, Hollywood Hijinx, Hitchhiker's Guide, Wishbringer, Sorcerer, Spellbreaker, Enchanter, The Pawn, Ultima I, Ultima III, Ultima IV, Sherlock, Gremlins, The Hulk, Terrormolinos, The Fourth Protocol, The Hobbit.
Billy Kavanagh, 49 Drake Hall, Westhoughton, Bolton, BL5 2RA.

Never Ending Story, Zzzz, Quest for the Holy Grail.
Tony Kinnear, 49 Wainwright Avenue, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 2SZ.

Bally Hoo, Bored of the Rings, Borrowed Time, Deadline, Emerald Isle, Enchanter, Eureka (German, Arthurian, Roman), Gremlins, Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, The Hobbit, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Mind Shadow, Munroe Manor, Moonmist, Pirate Adventure, Planetfall, Planet of Death, Knight Orc Pt 1, Seastalker, Ship of Doom, Spell Breaker, Spiderman, Starcross, Stationfall, Tass Times, Lurking Horror, Tracer Sanction, Valkyrie 17, Very big cave adventure, Wishbringer, Worm in Paradise, Zork I, Zork II, Zork III.
Ian Gay, 18 Earsdon Close, Westdenton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE5 2RL.

SMASHED, Dracula, Frankenstein, Kentilla, Quest For The Holy Grail, Gnome Ranger I, II, Eureka II, IV, Zim Sala Bim, Cricket Crazy I.
Scott West, 10 Charnock Dale Rd, Gleadless, Sheffield, S12 3HP.

The Hobbit, Seastalker, Trinity, Leather Goddesses, Beurocracy, Hitchhiker's Guide, Stationfall.
Carl Kuttelwascher, 6 Robin Hill Drive, Camberley, Surrey. GU15 1EG

Enchanter, Zork I, II, III, Stationfall, Plundered Hearts, The Pawn, Shadowgate, Wishbringer.
Julian Loveday, 23 Herbert Road, Emerson Park, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 3LM.

Heroes Of Karn, Empire of Karn, Dracula, Seabase Delta, Spiderman, Hulk, Zzzz, Quest for the Holy Grail, Lord of the Rings, Price of Magik, The Pawn, Twin Kingdom Valley.
A Ridge, 4 Corwallis Avenue, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 4PP

Twin Kingdom Valley, The Hobbit, Hitchhiker's Guide, Return To Eden, Terrormolinos, Dallas Quest, Jinxter, Deja Vu, Shadowgate, The Three Muskateers, Pludered Hearts.
Steven Coomber, 6 Maysfield Close, Portishead, Bristol. BS20 9RL. Tel: 0272 844218 (6-9pm)

The Boggit, Hulk, Kayleth, Kobyashi Naru, Sherlock.
William Stephenson, 10 Inchcolm Terrace, South Queensferry, West Lothian, Scotland. EH30 9NA

Corruption, Tass Times in Tonetown, King's Quest III.
Simon Ball, 1A Castle Flats, South Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, LE65 8Q. Tel: 0530 415103 (5-10pm)

Zzzz, Kentilla, Seabase Delta, Token of Ghall, Pirate Adventure, Voodoo Castle, Spacy Odyssey, Buckaroo Banzai, Redhawk, Kwah, Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure, Impossible Mission, Adventureland, Lord of the Rings, Labyrinth, The Count, Rebel Planet, Sea of Blood, The Bard's Tale I and II, Jack the Ripper, Legacy of the Ancients, Frankenstein, Book Of The Dead, Temple Of Terror, Neverending Story, Deja Vu, Masters Of The Universe, Fourth Protocol
Paul Shields, 35 Threshelford, Basildon, Essex, SS16 5UB.

Zork II, Gnome Ranger, Knight Orc (part one).
Steve Parker, 13 Elizabeth Road, Seaton, East Devon, EX12 2DS.

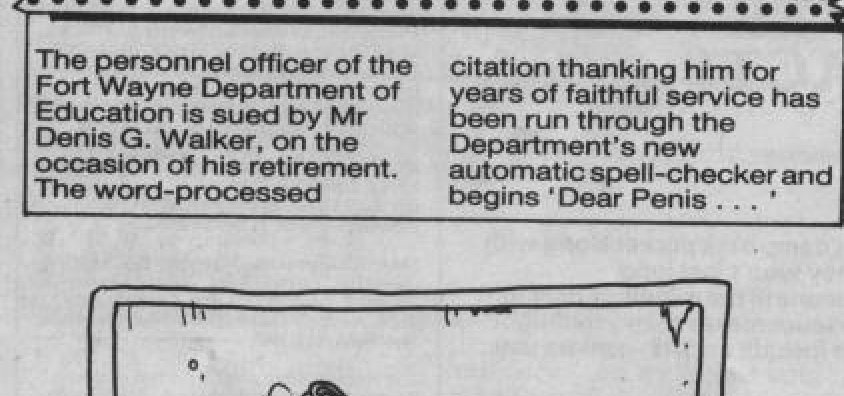
CLASSIC COMPUTER Cock Ups



In the twenty years that he's been involved with computers, THIS is the series Mel Croucher has been waiting to write! So in this, the first instalment of a new series, he brings you comedy, tragedy, horror and farce, and a sincere hope that you enjoy his compilation of all-time classic computer cock-ups:

DATELINE: Indiana, USA, February 1987

The personnel officer of the Fort Wayne Department of Education is sued by Mr Denis G. Walker, on the occasion of his retirement. The word-processed citation thanking him for years of faithful service has been run through the Department's new automatic spell-checker and begins 'Dear Penis . . .'



DATELINE: Paris, France, October 1985

The expression 'a sticky situation' is given a whole new meaning when a European advertising agency experiences head crashes and damage to disk drives over a three month period. The data base for advertising hoarding bookings gets corrupted and is swapped, but what the programmer doesn't bother to check out is the fact that back-up disks are also corrupted. Posters are booked on a calendar month basis, and normally change over on the first of each month, or within a few days. On the first of the month following the computer cock-up, 27 sites have posters changed several times within a few hours, 50 are not changed at all and six have more than one pissed off poster paster turning up at the same time. In one spectacular dispute two men are hospitalised after a battle of sticky ladders.

DATELINE: Sydney, Australia, June 1987

Long queues from outside many of the 1,300 branches of the Westpac Bank, after massive computer failure allows cash dispensers to pay out unlimited sums of money to regular customers and total strangers alike. In central Sydney, tramps and winos set up a well-organised cooperative system with its own stewards, allowing the city's down-and-outs a communistic maximum of 500 dollars each. By the time the error is spotted, the bank is down by millions, but at time of writing is still too embarrassed to put a figure on the cock-up. It seems that international cash transactions were also without any controls for several hours, and foreign devils gleefully ripped off millions electronically.

DATELINE: Thule, Greenland, October 1960

The Third World War begins when the NORAD early warning system indicates that the United States in under massive attack by Soviet missiles, with a certainty of 99.9%, and NATO hits the Red Button to retaliate. War is averted only after a computer operator realises that the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System radar has informed its computers that the missiles are homing in on a very familiar flight path. In fact, a flight path that is older than mankind itself. Yes folks, nobody bothered to inform the machines that the Moon rises, so the computer reckons it's an enemy missile and orders us to nuke it!

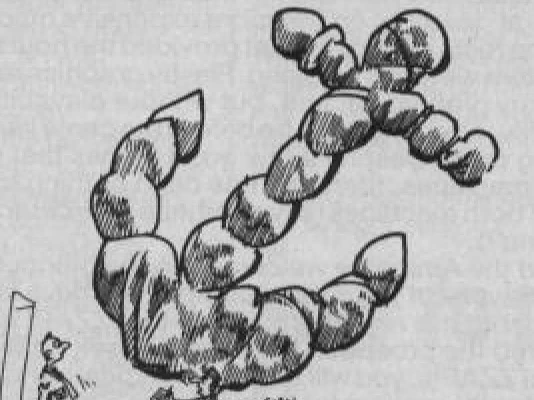
DATELINE: Malvern, England, April 1987

Highly sensitive secrets from the Ministry of Defence Royal Signals and Research Establishment are discovered by a computer student on a second-hand machine he buys at an army surplus store. On the computer's hard disk over £1500 of applications software is lurking, and the data includes a complete breakdown of past and future budgets, design and manufacture programs for equipment, classified files with special 'self destruct' security codes, full staff details, research details and the security systems used by the Ministry of Defence to protect secret files. The MoD are still suffering from brown trousers because a second similar computer has yet to be tracked down. The price that the student paid for this saucerful of secrets? Forty-five quid!

DATELINE: London, England, 1986

Today newspaper suffers heavy losses during its first few months, after owner Eddy Shah has heralded his new creation as state-of-the-art computer technology. Eddy Shah now blames the financial mess on computer disruption after it discovered that the paper is suffering from electronic sabotage. Every time the air conditioning cuts in the computers go down, resulting in the loss of all the stories that have been keyed in. Several journalists, including the City Editor, give up the struggle and bin their terminals in favour of card indexes and bashed typewriters. The situation goes on for over 100 days before anyone has the bright idea to check the power supply. *Today* is about to go down the tubes and is eventually acquired by Rupert Murdoch.





DATELINE: London, England, 1985

A Park Lane hotel runs into trouble with the tax man after the wrong VAT software is fed into its computer. All billing and guest lists are suspended, and the check-in desk is described as 'pandemonium'. The situation in several hotel rooms turns into something from a *Carry On* film when new guests are led into bedrooms which are already occupied by folk who can best be described as naked, whereas people trying to check out are unable to get their bills now that all records have been flushed down the electronic toilet.

DATELINE: Colorado, USA, February 1979

The supplies clerk in the US army base places a computerised order for spare parts. Unfortunately he types in computer part number 4772 instead of 4972. Instead of a modest little order requesting the headlamp for a jeep, a seven ton marine anchor arrives on the back of a huge truck. Believing computers to be infallible, nobody bothers to question whyan army base 1000 miles from the coast needs a battleship anchor.

DATELINE: US Command, Europe,November 1956

While the British are losing the war in Egypt, and the Hungarians are being invaded by the Russians, four computer-monitered events conspire to trigger off NATO's standing order response plan. At this time the plan calls for 'a single massive nuclear attack on the Soviet Union.' The events monitored are as follows: One, unidentified aircraft are flying over Turkey, heading West. Two, a hundred Soviet MiG-15 fighters are flying over Syria. Three, a British bomber has been shot down over Syria by Russian MiGs. Four, the Russian naval fleet is moving through the Dardanelles. The nuclear obliteration of the Soviet Union is cancelled when the aircraft over Turkey are sighted and found to be a flock of swans, the MiGs over Syria are a small official escort for the Syrian President, the British bomber reports in to say that it has mechanical problems and the Russian fleet is on a scheduled exercise.

DATELINE: Ferrara, Italy, May 1983

Signor Victor Alfredo Guilletto receives a bill from the newly computerised local telephone authority. There are only three things wrong with it: one, the bill is for the equivalent of two and a half million quid; two, Signor Guilletto is not on the phone; three, he can't protest without a Ouijah Board because he died in 1948.

DATELINE: Cardiff, Wales, 1985

Mrs. Russ Allen, marketing officer of the Chapter Art Centre, bans computers after they try to sabotage his entire establishment. The machines are fed information for three months before it is discovered that the system has never worked at all. Mr. Allen says, 'the machine ate all our information, including all our historical records, and refused to disgorge the material'. Imagine all our records built up over a decade simply thrown into the waste paper basket and hurled into oblivion. The machine is sitting like a malignant being in the corner with nobody daring to touch it again!

DATELINE: Apeldoorn, Holland, August 1987

The Eros escort and dating agency goes bankrupt after angry clients blockade office premises, the car park and phone lines. After the installation of a computerised data base for match making, a temporary secretary has been too embarrassed to tell her employers that she doesn't know how to program the machine, and has been matching clients at random. For some reason clients are objecting to being paired up with partners of the wrong sex, age and inclination, and in one spectacular case a 62 year-old widower who has been sent totally inaccurate details about himself objects to being listed as 'a playful virgin!'

ZZAP! Rrap

I'm feeling a bit sorry for myself this month since I, the famous Lloyd Mangram, have been put into black and white – oh well, I hope the content of the Rrap will add a bit of colour. Who knows, the mono might suit my nature (mumble mumble) . . . Anyway, onto the hard stuff: we've got some really c-r-a-z-y people writing to this section of the mag nowadays, from someone who thinks they're the Cookie monster to a semi-human with no sense of humour. Oh, and there's an all-new section, 'Pilchard of the month', awarded to the most abusive and cretinous letter we receive. First off, however, is the winner of our shaggy dog story mini competition . . .

SOFT, STRONG AND VERY, VERY LONG

(Gordon Houghton in love affair with Andrex puppy dog shock - exclusive)

Dear Lloyd,
On the 17th of August I received a tip off from Mr 'X' of ZZAP! TOWERS, Ludlow. So, being a reporter of The Sun newspaper potential, I followed up the allegations that Gordon Houghton the Editor of ZZAP! 64 was having an affair with the puppy dog of Andrex TV commercial fame. I followed Mr Houghton to 17 The High Street, Dyfed, the home of Mr Charlton, owner of Sian, the Andrex puppy dog. Mr Houghton went inside and 15 minutes later he was seen leaving with Sian, hand-in-paw. They then left for Mr Houghton's apartment where they went inside and closed the curtains. Mr Houghton refused to comment but we did manage to get comments from Sian and Mr 'X'. Sian said 'Woof, Woof' while Mr 'X' said 'why aye man'.
Steven Howard, 111 Higher Drive, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Suffolk

Well, we thought it was funny!
LM

AMIGA 'BACON' REACTION

Dear Lloyd,
Flipping through the pages of this month's ZZAP!, I was surprised to see the continuation of the debate concerning the inclusion of material relating to the Amiga in your excellent publication. Don't think that I'm jumping on the bandwagon, but I would like to air my views on this topical and controversial subject.

I owned a Spectrum for the good part of three years, and the entertainment value I derived from it has been great. At Christmas, I upgraded to a C64, a step which I consider to be a good one. Obviously, the differences between the two machines are great, with extra colours and sound on the 64, and faster processing time on the Speccy – but both machines had a firm software base supplied by honest software houses.

Imagine my initial chargrin when I read about the ST and Amiga. Two new machines that blasted away the 'antiquated' and 'humble' 8-bit machines. If I had waited a few months more, I could have bought one of the 16-bit machines! However, as the months progressed and I established a fair-sized software collection (with ZZAP!'s help!) I realised that the 8-bit trailblazers were far from their graves. Despite superior 'peripheral' features on the more expensive machines, they lacked the main ingredient that provided the hours of use that the 8-bitters were still enjoying. Flashy graphics and wonderful sound may grab you at first, but without playability and hookability, how long will it be before the game lies on the shelf gathering dust? Despite a few good games that emerged on the new machines, there still has been nothing to use the full power of both machines (save perhaps *Interceptor* and *Carrier Command*?).

Should the Amiga be welcomed to the glorious pages of ZZAP!? Several of your fellow competitors have already taken that step, but it is reassuring to see that ZZAP! waited and considered the prospect. If you take a look on the cover of a couple of ZZAP!s, you will see that a vertical band on the right reads 'Monthly review for Commodore Software'. The watchword here is Commodore. Don't Commodore make the Amiga? Also on the cover is a contradictory point: the title reads ZZAP! 64. Staunch pro-64 fanatics might question the future title of the mag: 'ZZAP! 64 & 512'.

Personally, I think that the inclusion of Amiga reviews is a good thing, giving us 64ers a chance to see what the future holds, for there is no denying that the 16-bit market will eventually eclipse the 8-bit one.
Mark Dawson, Lowesoft, Suffolk

. . . The presentation is better than it's ever been, and the new staff seem to be establishing themselves. Gordon seems to have the right ideas, and what shines through it all is that although the team may be young, they all have enthusiasm, and that is something that had faded over the years.

The recent debate over Amiga Action has certainly made interesting reading! Personally, I think it's an excellent idea to let us 64 owners know what's happening on the 16-bit scene. There is ample room for both machines to co-exist – let's face it, I'm sure if we could all afford an Amiga and its software, we would all up-grade. As we can't, both machines will be for different markets, each with their pros and cons. Look at the better specification of 64 to the Spectrums but people still buy both, and both markets continue to thrive. If I could, I'd up-grade and keep my 64 for these reasons. The 64 user base is too great for it to disappear overnight anyway, so let's have a look at the superb graphics of a game like *Carrier Command* on the Amiga, and let us all drool!
Mr J F Venus, Winchester, Hampshire

I would tell Gordon about your letters but he's engaged in a very delicate operation – munching his way through his fifth cream puff today. Any slight alteration in the air pressure due to a change in the clacking of my typewriter keys and he might explode. Oh – and sorry about the 'bacon' bit – I'm just feeling a bit hungry at the moment.

Anyway, times are changing and we're beginning to see ZZAP! more as a Commodore rather than a purely 64 magazine. That's one reason why we've modified the magazine's name this month – and it's still called ZZAP!, isn't it? After all, the computer industry hasn't been standing still for the last three years, so why should we? Again, as we've said before, the 64 stuff isn't losing out – if you calculate the percentage of review space given over to 64 games, you'll find it's greater than that awarded to Amiga stuff.

One more thing – what can we do if, for the last two months, we've had twice as many Amiga games as 64? Do we sit back and leave these games unreviewed and provide you, the readers, with a magazine of 100 or so pages covering purely 64 related issues and nothing else; or do we, like in this Issue, expand the magazine to 172 pages to accommodate the extra

Amiga stuff and some extra features we wanted to write? There's no real competition, is there?
LM

THE CUCKOO MONSTER

Dear Lloyd,
Dis is Cookie Monster, and me going to bring you up to date with Sesame Street Software Scene. First try and say dat three times quickly with a mouth full of COO-Kies yum yum yum yum. Sorry, me get carried away (burp!) Anyway, on with software. From software house Tellycomsoft come *Bigbirdbarian*, the best-seller in spell-em-up field. From oriental masters Snufalupagus Three come *The Last Barcly* and it pretty good too. Two good budget games are *Guy Blade* and arguments between two gouches over a pet worm, in other words, *Slimey's Mine* (no he's mine) they both deserve Silver Cookies so me eat them, for them, num num num. Ah dat better. Both budget games come from Code Monsters. From Elmocom, the adventure called *Ernie and Bert Could Make Head Nor Tail Of It* has just been released but it no very good. Tough cookies Elmocom. Last game today is favouie of the Count's from Grover Graphics – it is ten . . . ten great games ha ha ha. Oh well dis cookie monster saying bye bye.
Cookie Monster, Glasgow G41 4DF

Well . . . er . . . Mr Monster, you're a complete and utter raving lunatic, but we thank you for that interesting contribution to our topical discussion page – the page where everybody's views are heard (cue jingle). And now we go back to the studio for the latest news on amateur cabertossing in Alaska. Today's reply was brought to you by the letters L and M.
LM

MR LOGIC WRITES

Dear Lloyd,
Not being a person to fuss over minor cock-ups (?) I have never felt the need to write in to ZZAP! and complain. Until now. Way back in Issue 35, wee Paul Glancey joined the ZZAP! crew. Big deal! He was born in a canoe in Lake Michigan. Cor blimey! He has never been to America. Lake Michigan is in America. Weird. When he joined he was 18. His birthday was on May 12 so he is now 19. He was born in 1976 which makes him 12. I hope that was just a printing error.
Andrew Head, South Humberside.

Your parents have obviously omitted to inform you of one major aspect of life. Have you ever looked all the way down that great expanse of checked Millets shirt, down those corduroy trouser legs, right down to the very soles of your Adidas sneakers and thought there was something wrong? Well, Andrew, don't get too worried about it, but that missing link is a sense of humour. John Noakes has one, so why haven't you?
Send your mother out to get one straight away.
LM

HOW TO DO IT

Dear Lloyd,
Recently you have been receiving letters about people using their Commodores in different ways (like Benjamin Dehkas with *Psychedelia*, and Brian Wheeler with *Outrun*).
My friend and I decided to incorporate Brian's idea on *Project Stealth Fighter*. I sit behind my friend's chair as he plays and each time he has to eject, I throw him out the window. Good eh?
Donald Flemming, Broughton, Lancs.

Remember kids, Donald is highly skilled and knows exactly what he is doing. This is not *something you should try at home.*
LM

ATTACK OF THE MUTANT BRAIN

Dear Lloyd,
I came in the Texas where the magazine and a Newsfield Publication - ZZAP! 64 not here in the shop. Why? And in the texas the game is out, same before! Why it's no new game? Please write the letter for me.
Tnak you
John Athinson, Scarborough, N. Yorks.

I am deeply sympathetic to your plight and recommend that you consult another brain surgeon immediately. This sort of unprofessional practice should not be allowed to continue.
LM

HA HA HA

Dear Lloyd,
I was looking for each word from the list of ten, and ringing it in the word square when a faint smile of joy spread across my face as I came to the last word. But then – oh what heartache – I couldn't find it anywhere. I searched frantically for the Z which begins the word.
Several hours later I breathed a sigh of relief, I had found the Z. But then heartache and yet more heartache the word didn't join the letter in any direction. So I had no other choice but to go into a state of mental depression and write this letter.
I have entered the competition anyway without the word marked down (because I couldn't find it) and I don't know whether it will be accepted or not. Please help me.
Simon Jones, Northwood.

Take your pick from any of the following excuses . . . 1) Er, ha ha. It was a little joke. 2) Weeeellll, the competition was a BIT easy, otherwise wasn't it? 3) Sorry, it was a mistake, and Paul (the man responsible) has been severely tortured.
LM

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

Dear Lloyd,
1. Why has everybody suddenly started asking loadsaquestions?
2. Why do they number them all?
3. There won't be a point 5.
4. I was really lying.
5. See, I told you I was lying.
6. I know all about bananas anyway Mr Bananaman.

Bye for now
Robin Badcock, Wakefield.

Zzzzzzzzz . . . Uh? Sorry, what was that?
LM

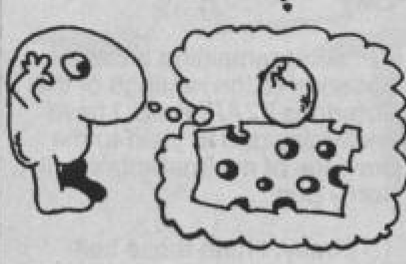
. . . After remaining a casual observer to the rantings of the notorious ZZAP! Rrap, I have finally decided to yield to the cravings of my (metaphorically) horny pen:

1. Firstly, I hate those half-baked dickheads who insist upon numbering their stupid, ignorant unconnected comments because they can't be bothered to articulate their views into proper, logical prose!
2. What happened to humour in this section? All we seem to get now is a few 14-year-old pseudo intellectuals who continually tell us how piracy may be justified by applied Freudian analysis ('Well, you see, copying games makes me all warm an' tingley . . . yeah, right here . . . ')
3. Please can we stop the mass debate on piracy? No one will ever change their views on it: the argument is exhausted.
4. There is NO!! point 4.

Ah well, back to the world of dreams. I feel much better now, thanks. Seriously though, I think you can see my point. I feel the magazine is getting stronger and stronger. All the best!
Stephen Murray, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear.
PS – Who is this genius 'The Banana' (Issue 40) I love he/she/it and I want to have his/hers/its babies.

What do you mean there isn't any humour in ZZAP!? Haven't you heard the one about a tea-fairy trying to pass himself off as a ZZAP! reviewer by currying favour with a fa . . . (oh, hello, Gordon) . . . ntastically brilliant, rich and attractive editor?
No, nor have I.
LM

ZZAP! RRAP



DISK DRIVE ROUND THE BEND

Dear Lloyd,
This letter is partly a complaint about disk drives. Firstly, whenever I try to load a game I can't find the PLAY button. Secondly, when I get it going I can't find the STOP button!! Lastly, and definitely not least of all, the cassettes don't fit in the disk drive. (As you can see, reading instruction manuals is not one of my specialities). Normally I get BIG BERTHA to sit on the cassettes so they fit.

The main reason I'm writing, though, is because I wish to know ZZAP!'s address. What is it, because I can't send any fan mail until I know?

I have a 64. As well as ZZAP! I also get CRASH but their pokes don't seem to work! My second query is: why can't you buy computer games in Mothercare (my favourite shop).

By the way ZZAP!, I'm a bit short of ten pounds (hint, hint, ahem, ahem!). So my friend told me to eat more.

Arran Skinner, Barnet, Herts.

Funny you should know Big Bertha. She sat on me once back in '62 and it was a very enjoyable experience. Unfortunately, I still didn't fit into the disk drive and we lost touch. Perhaps you could put in a good word for me . . .
LM

CHEESED OFF EGG PEOPLE

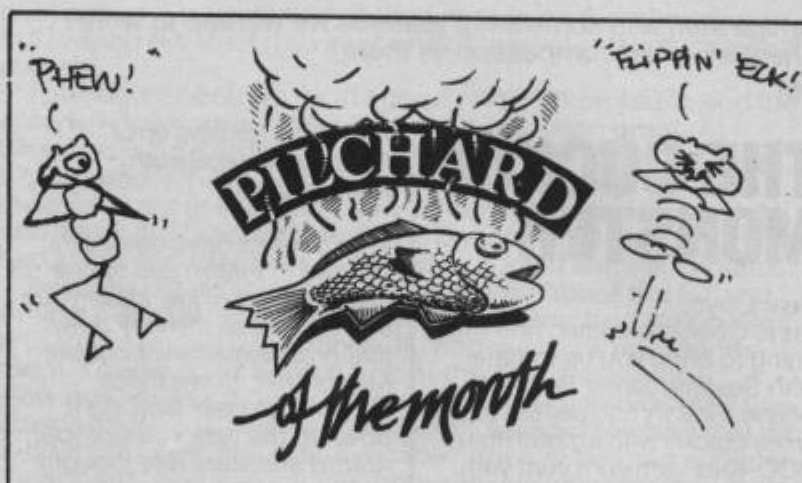
Dear Lloyd,
After reading the ZZAP! challenge (Issue 41 - September) me, Phil, and my good friend Rich were totally outraged that you should refer to the game *Chuckie Egg* as 'tacky and only recognisable by OAPs'. We spent the best part of our many years of 64 ownership frantically searching high and low for this most addictive game of all time. It knocks the Gold medals off the so-called classics, ie, *Spindizzy*, *Impossible Mission* and *Mercenary* as far as activity is concerned. *Chuckie Egg* almost got a headline slot on *News At Ten* because of the hundreds of millions of people that were hooked on the game. It caused an outrage, leaving Mary Whitehouse in a state of turmoil that she has never quite got over.

So, you see, this 'tacky game' is alive and kicking and if it is left to myself and Rich to keep *Chuckie Egg* going, we will battle through thick and thin to stop this game being left to die in the icy wastes of hell.

Yours Lividly, Phil H and Rich T

PS As we are upgrading to Amiga 500s – hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, no more shift and runstop, no more boring multiloads etc, etc – Are A 'n' F planning to convert?

As far as I know there are no plans for an Amiga version. A pity because I used to enjoy playing Chuckie Egg *until I accidentally mistook it for a piece of cheese and grated it into a moussaka. If anyone can get me a replacement I'd be very grateful.*
LM



Steven Barr
29 cupro
22/8/88

Dear Mangram,
I enjoy reading my copy of zzap. (I think that its name any way) But up untill now it has become C*ap because of P.G alias Paul Glancy, (what a w**ker). his ugly Baby face popsand genrally pi**e* evry body off. so please sack the litte w**ker or I wont be purchasing zzip no zzap any more. thanks

Signed steve

P.S. I think you realise that I dont like him very much thank for your cooperation

Congratulations! After ten years of trying you've finally got your name in print – and what an achievement, what can I say? Well . . . nothing really. I think I'll leave it up to the subject of your prize-winning letter himself – PG.

(Thanks for your straight-from-the-shoulder opinion, Steve, but no-one here has taken your quaint remarks to heart, least of all, myself. If only you'd included your full address, I could have rewarded your honesty by sending you a little something – like a dead rat. I'm sure you could have been great friends. PG)
LM

Now those evenings are getting darker I'm finding less and less time to get on with my gardening and more and more opportunities for sitting down in an armchair with a strong cup of Ceylon tea. Happiness! Well, nearly: I can't exactly sit in a chair for hours on end with nothing to read and I can't keep inviting the ZZAP! team round. For a start, I've never got enough for Gordo to eat and that new girl Kati keeps wandering around muttering something about ancient Egyptians and making embarrassing comments about my physique. So, unless you want me to lose all my tea and hair gel to Paul and Maff, send all your thoughts, musings, moans and complaints to: LLOYD MANGRAM, ZZAP! RRAP, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB. I read them all, though I can't promise personal replies – I've always been a bit shy that way.

One two three. One free too.



With Boots computer games you just can't lose. Buy any three from September 5th to November 19th and you get another one free. Just ask a sales assistant for the special Collect Card* and we'll stamp it every time you buy a game from our large selection of titles. With three stamps on your card, all you have to do is return to a Boots store. And then we'll give the game away.

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*COLLECT CARD ONLY AVAILABLE UNTIL 22nd OCTOBER 1988. ALL TITLES MUST COST £7.95 OR MORE AND BE FOR THE SAME COMPUTER. THE FREE OFFER DOES NOT APPLY TO COMPILATIONS. SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY IN LARGER STORES ONLY.

ZZAP! COMP

BE EMLYN HUGHES AND WIN SOME SHOES

Audiogenic!



It's a funny old game being a soccer star. One minute you're a 70s football hero with long trendy hair and even hipper (cool, man) sideburns. You've got a cheesy grin, an even cheesier laugh and some cheesy feet – and you score goals . . . well, not *that* many goals. Next minute you retire, become a TV star – thanks to some very fetching jumpers – meet Princess Anne and make a lot of money using your cheesy grin. Ten seconds later (or thereabouts) and someone from Audiogenic's knocking at your door wanting you to star in a computer game – *Emlyn Hughes International Soccer*, to be exact.

Amazing! Just when it looked like your defending days were finished, kids all over the country are going to start them again. Not only that, they're gonna be doing hook shots, back heels, starring in practice sessions and editing their players' skills (well, what do you expect from the best footy sim so far?). Well guv'nor, (and you can put that lamb chop away, missus) that's just the way it is – in this game, you never know what's going to happen at the end of the day ('aye, Greavsie, you don't').

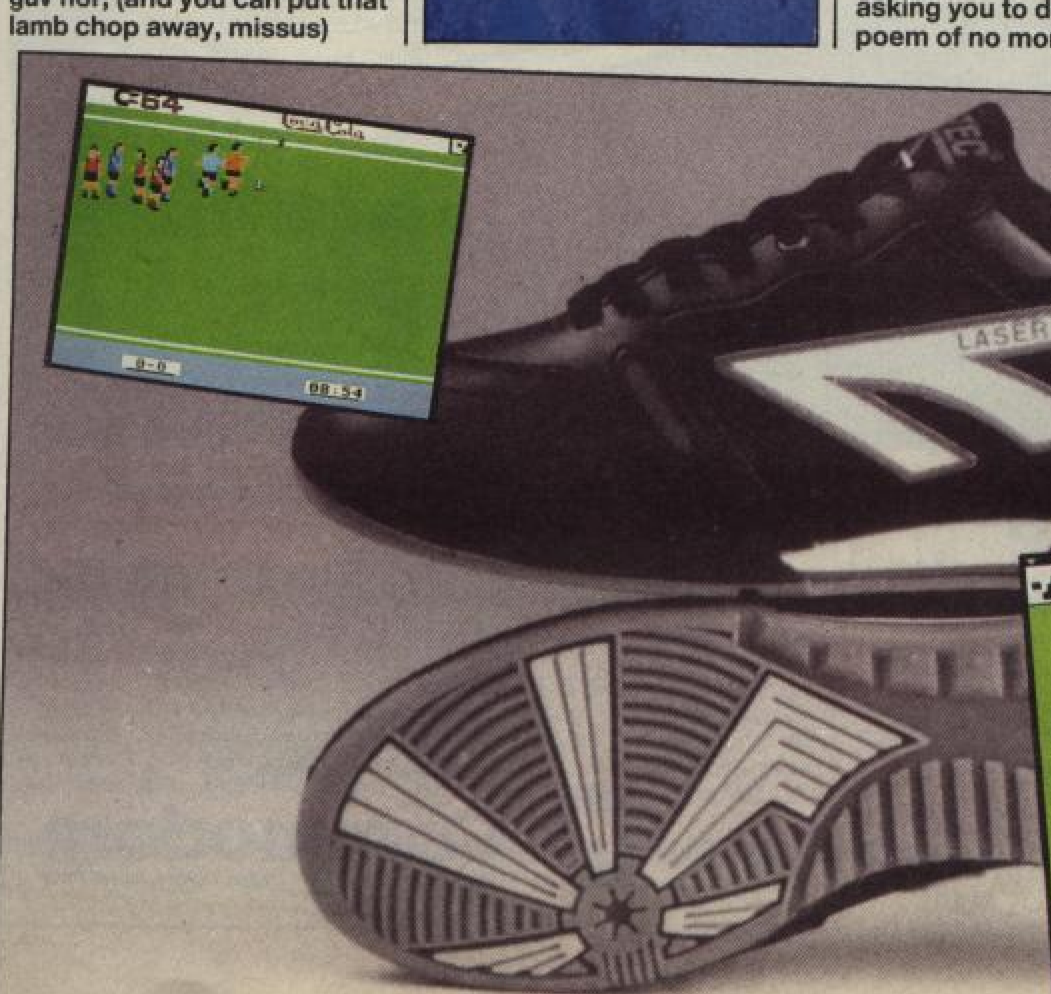
Ha! Fooled you! You may not be able to predict the outcome of a footy match but one thing you do know for certain (well, you know now we've told you) is that by the end of the working day on November 15th (Gordon's birthday – hint, hint) some incredibly lucky, boundlessly fortunate, dead jammy individual is going to be the proud winner of a football signed by Emlyn Hughes (gasp!) *and* a pair of well valuable Hi-Tech laser trainers (cor!). Not only that – 24 other people are going to get a pair of trainers each as well. Coo!

For a prize like that we could have asked you to climb Mount Everest in a pair of clogs, steal Gordon's favourite cream horn, stir a pudding with PG, or tell Kati she's a pillock and survive – but we haven't. All we're asking you to do is to write a poem of no more than 100 words, telling us what you'd do if there was a flash of lightning and you were turned into Emlyn Hughes for a day. Be as funny, wild, wacky, zany, dead serious or totally miserable as you like – but just make sure all the lines rhyme with the name of the famous Crazy Horse himself ('Hughes', stupid!) Got that? Good . . .

Send this work of grand literature (remember to write it down first – and use a pen) to:

MAKE MINE AN EMLYN COMP, ZZAP! TOWERS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB

Remember – if you don't enclose your name and address, we can't put your prize in the post. And if we can't do that, you won't get one. Nya nya nya nya nya.





ZZAP!



PG's TIPS

Hello again, and welcome to this month's bumper bonanza bigness of bnang, boing, bnung . . . Oh – nuts to the alliteration – I'll start again.

Hello. Here are the tips, and there're a lot of them.

Phew. Right. Now down to business.

DRACONUS (Zeppelin)

Stuart Bassett **of Stockton has sent in a cheat mode for this Silver Medal game which gives infinite lives! YEAH! WOWEEE! I bet you're really excited about that. Well, even if you're not, give it a go anyway. What** Stuart **reckons you need to do is collect the Morph Helix (which allows you to change into the Draconewt) and when you get to your last life find a Morph slab, turn yourself into the Draconewt and get killed. You should then be put back on the last record slab with infinite lives.**

A further tip from Stuart **for anyone stuck looking for the Necromancer's staff. Collect the Dragon Eye and go back to the point where you found the Morph Helix. You should now be able to see a hole in the wall. Enter to find the staff.**

CHUBBY GRISTLE (Grandslam)

Ooh dear, not a particularly good game, but this doubtless has its fans somewhere (amongst the programmers' families?). Anyway, if you find the pounds just aren't piling up, give this little POKE **a whirl.** LOAD **the game, reset and type** POKE 3613,173 (RETURN), **then** SYS 2994 (RETURN) **to restart with infinite car-park attendants.** Peter Custerson **of Bridgend in Mid Glamorgan is the man responsible for that.**

TO HELL AND BACK (CRL)

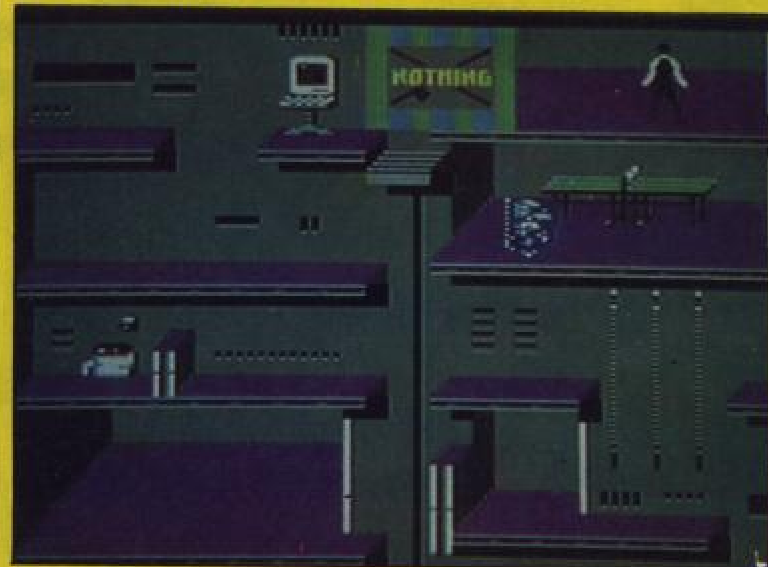
To go with the map in this very issue, here are some funky, get-down-and-groove-baby, POKEs **for this mediocre** Ghosts 'N' Goblins **variant.** Robert Troughton **of** The Cheat Machine **reckons you should** LOAD **the game, reset the computer and enter:**

POKE 32371,173 (RETURN) **For infinite lives**
POKE 32524,173:POKE 32483,173 (RETURN) **For infinite energy**
SYS 30464 (RETURN) **To start the game**

By the way, Robert, **thanks for the copy of** TCM **issue 4, which I must say was most impressive. Anyone who would like more information on this rapidly-expanding publication should write to** Robert **at 42 Browfield Terrace, Silsden, Keighley, West Yorks, BD20 9PT. (Free publicity plugs, Inc.)**

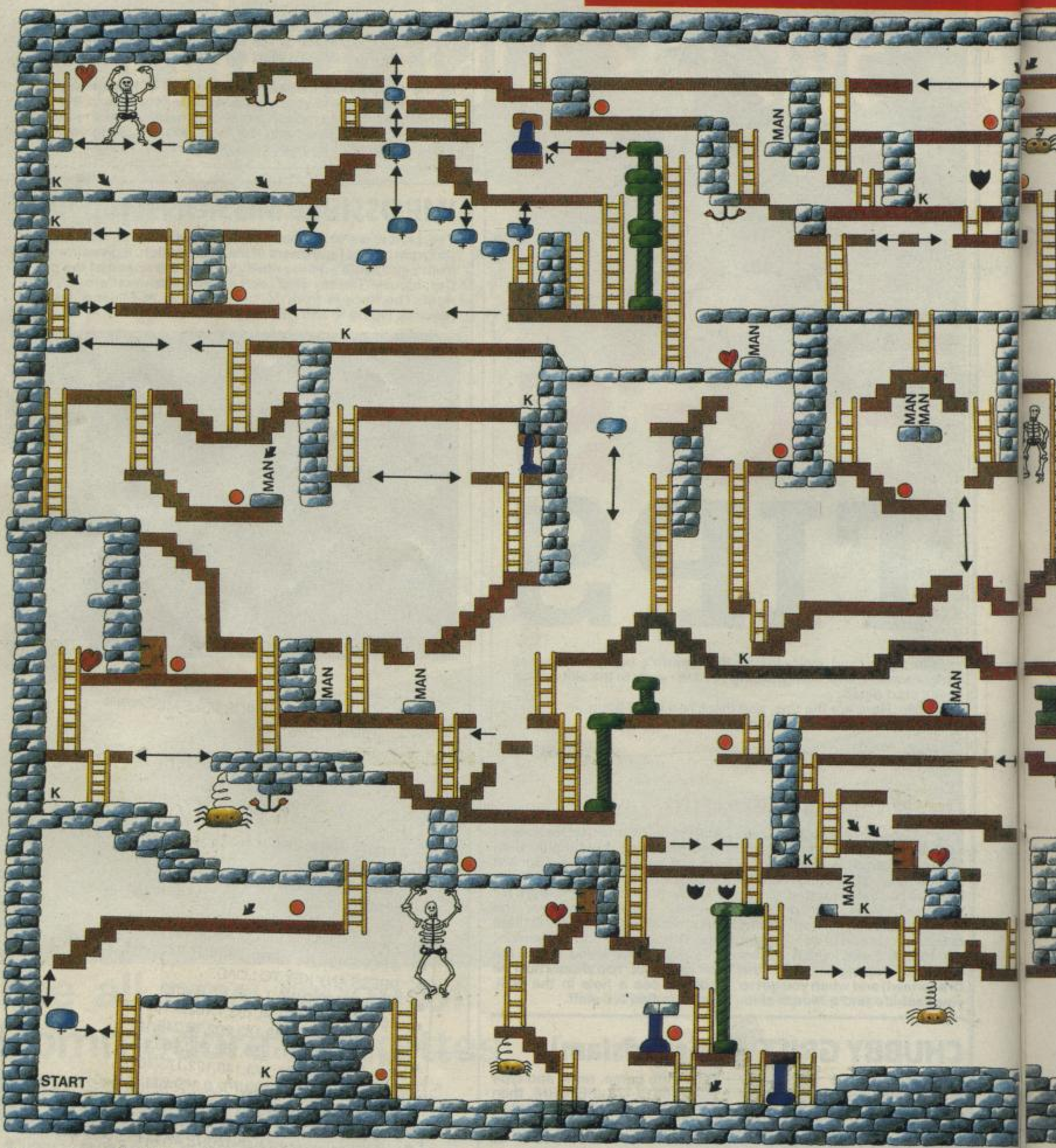
IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II (Epyx)

Yes, I know we've printed hacks for this game already, but this program caters for owners of the disk version. It gives immunity from sentrybots and the ability to alter the speed of the game. Cor, blimey! Tap my skull with a sledgehammer! etc. Er, yeah, right. The hack is from Tommi Turpeinen **of Finland, and just requires typing in and** RUN**ning.**



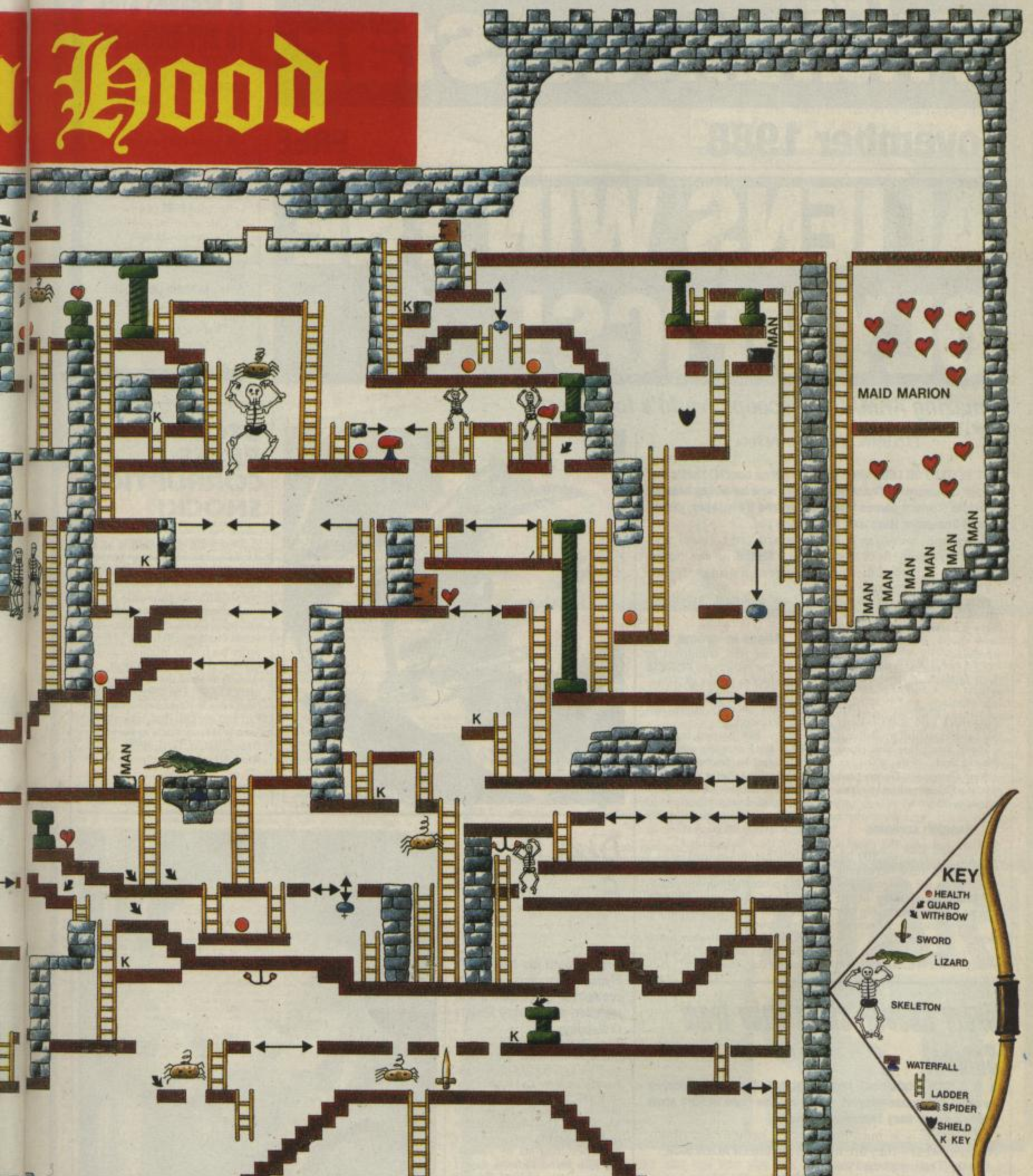

```
0 PRINT CHR$(147) "IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II –
HACK BY T.T 1988"
1 PRINT "PLEASE WAIT . . . "
2 FOR A=679 TO 762:READ B:POKE A,B:C=C+B:
NEXT
3 IF C<>9216 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN DATA!!":
END
4 PRINT:INPUT "IMMUNITY FROM SENTRYBOTS?
(Y/N) ";A$
5 IF A$<>"Y" THEN POKE 700,215
6 PRINT:INPUT "GAME SPEED? (1 – FAST, 2 – NOR-
MAL, 3 – SLOW)";A$
7 A=VAL(A$):IF A<1 OR A>3 THEN 6
8 POKE 730,A+1:PRINT:PRINT "INSERT DISK AND
PRESS ANY KEY TO LOAD"
9 POKE 198,0:WAIT 198,1:SYS 679
10 DATA 120,169,54,133,1,162,5,189
11 DATA 242,2,149,183,202,16,248,169
12 DATA 0,32,213,255,162,200,160,2
13 DATA 142,121,173,140,122,173,76,0
14 DATA 172,169,169,162,0,160,234,141
15 DATA 16,49,142,17,49,140,18,49
16 DATA 169,201,162,2,160,234,141,73
17 DATA 47,142,74,47,140,75,47,141
18 DATA 91,47,142,92,47,140,93,47
19 DATA 76,128,8,3,2,255,8,248
20 DATA 2,73,77,80
```

Robin



Map by PAUL HOWARD & THE MASKED MAPPER. Drawn by YVONNE PRIEST

Hood


MAID MARION
MAN
KEY
HEALTH
GUARD WITH BOW
SWORD
LIZARD
SKELETON
WATERFALL
LADDER
SPIDER
SHIELD
K KEY

THE Thalamus Star

November 1988 **FREE**

ALIENS WIN THE OLYMPICS!

Amazing ARMALYTE scoops world's top awards

EXCLUSIVE by HARRY BARSTOOL

'VHY ZETTLE FOR LESS vhen you can get ze best?!' That's the official comment on Thalamus's brand new bouncing blaster Armalyte – and it comes from Dr Manfred V Flypaper, president of Computer Research Associates plc.

Awesome *Armalyte* has won award after award and looks like being Britain's biggest **WINNER** at the Seoul Olympics, even though it wasn't entered for a single event!

Top sports experts say they're **STUNNED** by the magnificence of *Armalyte* on the corky Commodore 64/128 and have given it their highest accolades!

ZZAP! voted *Armalyte* a Gold Medal with 97% (pages 24)!

A *Commodore User* spokeshack said 'lorks-o-lordy this game is so brill we'll give it a Super Star'! *(are you shure aboutsh thsis? - Ed)*

And *Computer Gamesweek* gave it a Fab award and a super soaraway 93%!

Passion screams

And it's not only the experts who are raving – yes, **YOU** the public have been screaming passionately for *Armalyte* after the **EXCLUSIVE** showing of the biggest blast since the big one at the Personal Computer Show!

A spokesscreamer for the crowd at the Thalamus stand told our reporter: '*Armalyte*!, *Armalyte*!, *Armalyte*!'

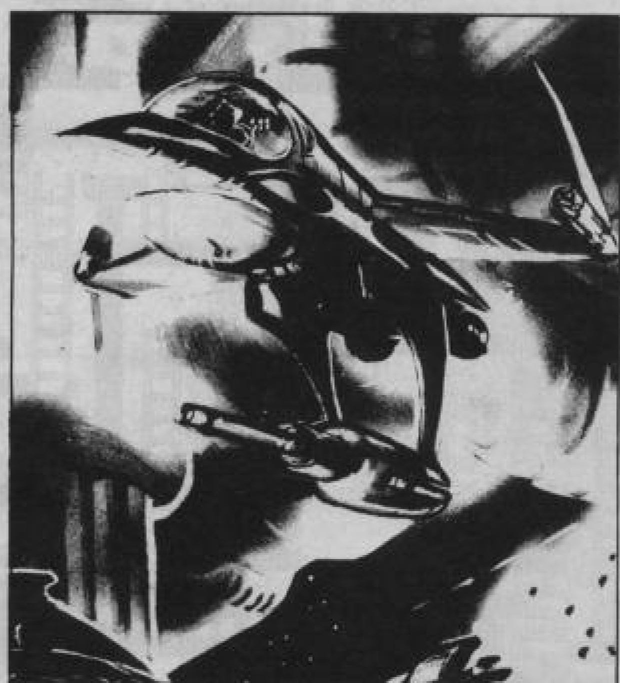
Aliens in 'drome

But aliens who attempted to invade the crowd and **DISGUISE** themselves as copies of *Armalyte* were thwarted by plucky PC Show security guard Bill 'Reg' Prescott.

Brave Bill battled for **TWO AND A HALF** minutes with the aliens after he discovered they were unable to wear their identification badges. 'Cor blimey guv,' said a weary but proud Bill, 'it's more than my job's worth letting them creatures in wifout their badges innit?'

Instead, they turned up at a Commodore reception at London's posh Hippodrome nightclub and are now **OFFICIAL** Amiga dealers for Interstellar Zone Four!

THE STAR SAYS: *Britain needs more men like Paul Cooper! (shurely one ish enough? - Ed)*



10 REASONS STILL TO BUY HAWKEYE!

☆ It's really brilliant

☆ *Hawkeye* won a **GOLD MEDAL** in ZZAP!

☆ Play one level on this month's cover cassette!

☆ *Hawkeye* is the best arcade combat game in existence!

☆ It's a snip: £9.99 on cassette!

☆ And only £12.99 on diskette, plus **FREE** demos!

☆ 12 levels of manic action with gorgeous graphics!

☆ There are still more prizes to be won in the Gold Rush!

☆ It's **NUMBER ONE** in the Commodore charts! (Gallup)!

☆ That's ten, and no misteak! *(Shere's one - Ed)*

STOP PRESS – CORRUPTION SHOCK!

A six-minute investigation by *The Thalamus Star* has uncovered a shocking series of bribes in high places. Documents obtained by our sleuth team show that anyone – including Government ministers and senior Vatican officials – who sends Thalamus a cheque or postal order for just £9.99 can receive a cassette copy of *Hawkeye* or *Armalyte*! And the disk copy is a mere £12.99! The bribes are apparently made payable to Thalamus Ltd and sent to Thalamus at 1 Saturn House, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire RG7 4QW!

Dear Dr F . . .

Every month Dr Manfred V Flypaper answers readers' problem's. This month's star question comes from Thelma O'Wapping . . .

Dear Dr F, Last Christmas I got drunk at the office party and, shall we say, bought an Amiga. I regret it now, but it seems to turn my boyfriend on and he always wants to, well, you know, play Thalamus games on it. It has got to the point where he is pestering me to 'load it' for him three times a day. I keep on telling him I haven't got any Thalamus games for the Amiga but he just won't listen and I am afraid there is something wrong with him. Is this normal? What can I do?

It'z your lucky day, Thelma! Very zoon Thalamus vill releaze ze brilliant Armalyte and Hawkeye on ze Amiga, and zey have four new titles on ze vay: Xenodrome, Bamboo, Hel and Search For Sharla. So I vould zay zere vould be zomething wrong viv your boyvriend iff he did *not* go crazy about zis vunderful softvare!



Do *you* have any questions or funny true-life stories for Dr F? Send them to: Dear Dr F, Thalamus, 1 Saturn House, Calleva Park, Aldermaston, Berkshire RG7 4QW.

Crazy Cooper skins baby from Saturn!

IN A SHOCK statement last night top Thalamus sources revealed that game-players now have the right to bare arms – with a super sexy Thalamus T-shirt!

But there is a hush-hush secret behind the trendy Thalamuswear – they are made from **GREEN ALIEN SKIN**.

Cranky Thalamus boss Paul Cooper denied it. 'I deny this,' said Cooper crankily.

But *The Thalamus Star* has **PROOF**: the label says '100% Combed Cotton', which means green alien skin in Cooper's cunning code!

Bleach party

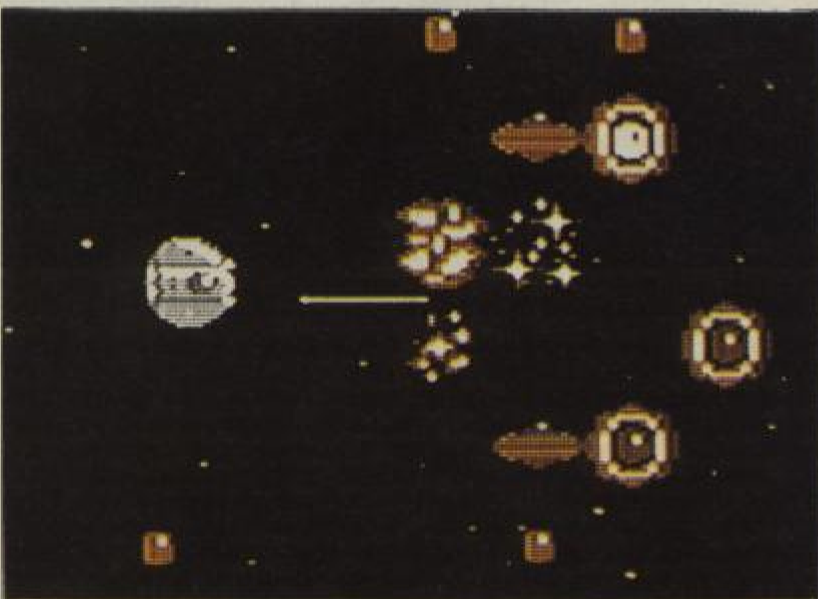
Crazy Cooper claimed that the T-shirts are **WHITE** and not **GREEN**. But *The Thalamus Star* has planted *(shurely 'dishcovered' - Ed)* a bottle of bleach in a cleaning warehouse near the Thalamus office.

And that proves that Cooper has been **BLEACHING** the green skin so it looks white!

THE STAR SAYS: *Will these evil aliens stop at nothing? Look out for a special T-shirt offer soon!*

HUNTER'S MOON (Thalamus)

This is a tip I discovered by accident ages ago, but seeing as Trevor Fisher of Manchester has just written in with the same idea I though my light had been too long under a bushel. As soon as you run into a spore's shot or a worker cell and your ship starts to explode, quickly press RUN/STOP and push up to access the menu. Go straight to PLAYER ONE and press fire, and now if you were quick enough in calling up the menu, you'll be back in the game with an undamaged ship! The only problem is that the screen area under your ship must be clear, so if a worker has laid some spores over your position the cheat won't work. It takes some practice, but once mastered it's really useful for saving lives.



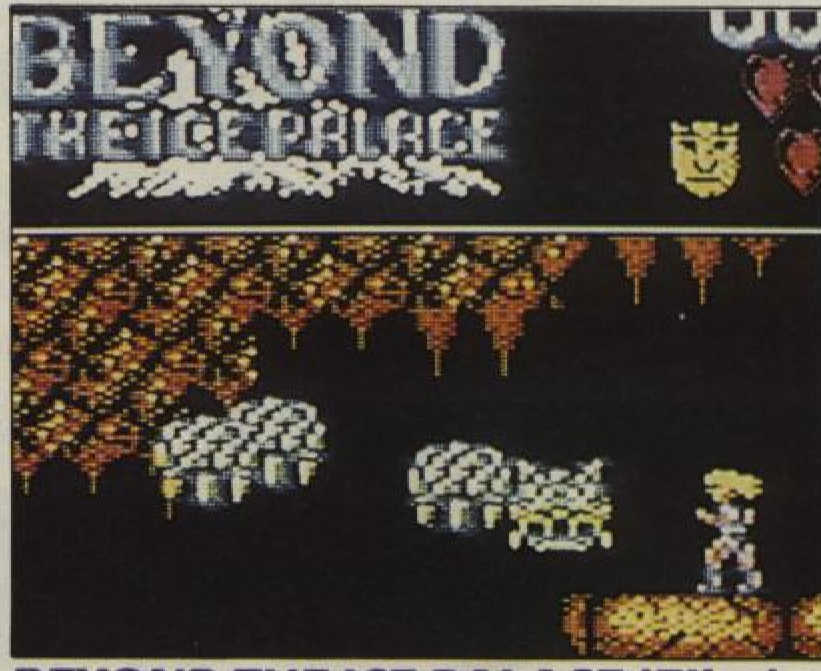
FOOT LOOSE (Leg-end Productions)

Here's a handy (or even, footy) tip to help out in games like Gryzor, Green Beret, Spy Hunter and Slap Fight – all those which use the space bar to select extra weapons or different manoeuvres. Having problems moving your hand from the joystick to the keyboard and back again at high speed? If you've got two joysticks you can save yourself lives and frustration by plugging the one you use for movement and firing in port two, and another in port one. Put the second one on the floor and place your toe over the fire button. Now you can tap the fire button with your toe and select extra weapons that way. Brill, eh? The best thing about this tip is that the second 'stick doesn't need to have perfect movement switches, so you can dig out an old one and give it a new lease of life. Thanks to Keith McLeman of Fraserburgh for that piece of interesting information.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN, MONTY

You may know about the cheat mode on this game – typing MONTY at the bottom right of the screen before loading – but it isn't terribly easy to use if you're unfamiliar with the 64's keyboard. Fu Sang Li of Crewe has solved that problem though, and this mini listing gets round all the fiddly cursor movement. Just type it in, RUN it and start the tape to play a really easy game.

```
1 PRINT CHR$(147)
2 FOR X=2019 TO 2023:READ Z
3 POKE X,Z:POKE X+54272,1:NEXT
4 PRINT "NOW LOAD THE GAME AS NOR-
MAL":NEW
5 DATA 13,15,14,20,25
```



BEYOND THE ICE PALACE (Elite)

Golly Gumdrops, this is a bit of a tough game, isn't it? Not any more, though, because Irvine resident, David Jumani and Warren Pilkington of Manchester have sent in some instant simplification POKEs which I wasn't able to test, because the office copy of the game has gone walkabout. If you want to give 'em a go anyway LOAD up the game, reset the computer and stroke these keys:

POKE 19123,173 (RETURN)
POKE 5918,173 (RETURN) For infinite lives
POKE 17820,173 (RETURN) Gets rid of most sprite collision detection
POKE 7748,255 (RETURN) For 255 spirits

There was some difference of opinion over the SYS call, though, for while David thought it was SYS 2602 (RETURN), Warren was sure it was SYS 2062 (RETURN). Me, I just don't know any more.

KLUTZ KORNER

The Mega Tips special back in Issue 41 had its fair share of bloopers, most of which were mercifully restricted to Martin's Mad Multipokes. Martin Pugh has since been in touch with the details which will correct the damage, so instead of printing the whole thing again, I'll just mention the corrections.

In the master program, line 4 should have read:
4 DATA 169,29,141,40,3,169,2,141,41,3,32,86,245

The line of code for the X-15 Alpha Mission hack should have read:
7 DATA169,0,141,64,136,141,98,136,141,212,136,223,178,76,235,2,-1

Hades Nebula also went wrong. The correct line is:
7 DATA 169,56,141,143,8,169,2,141,144,8,76,235,2

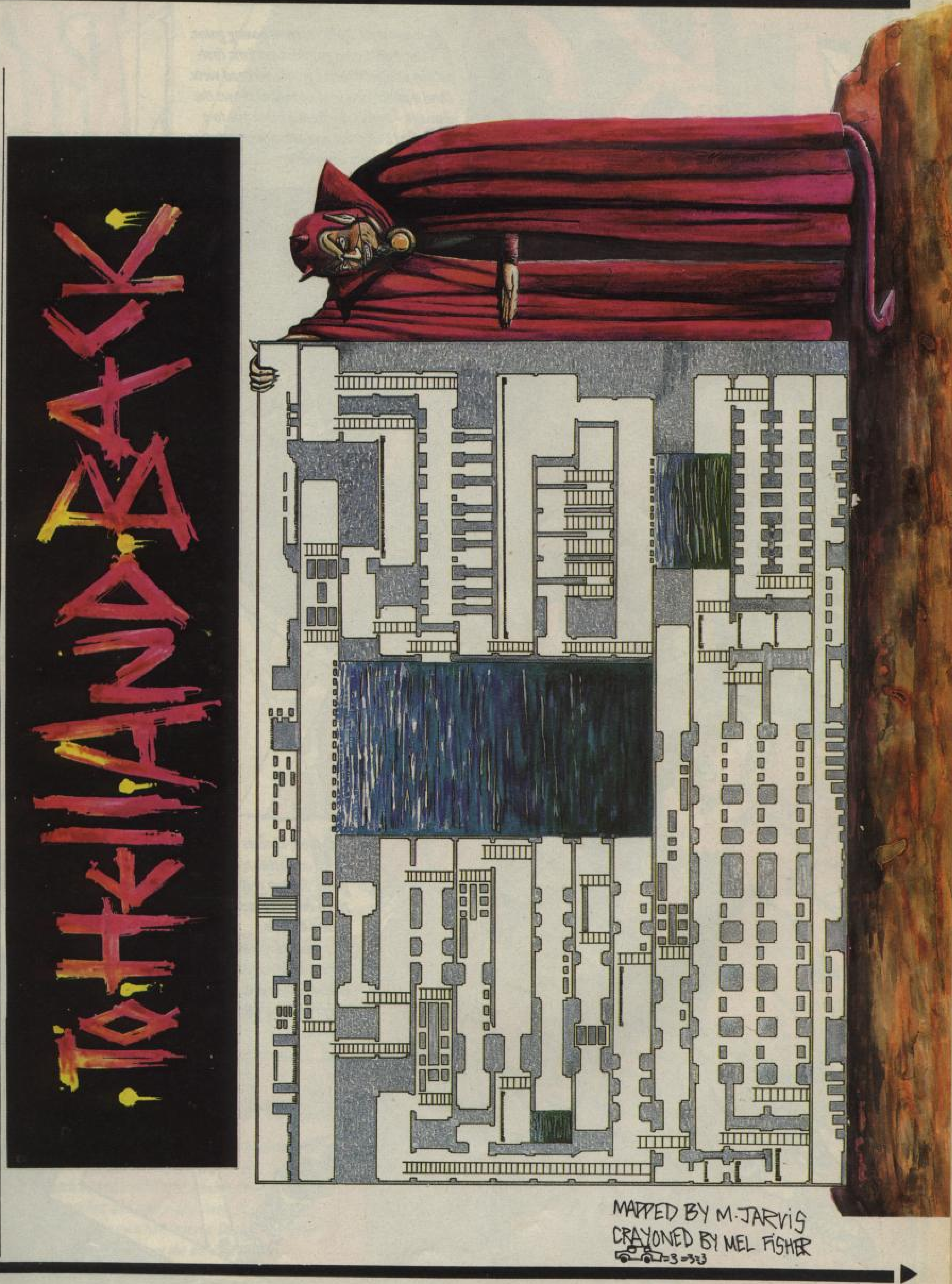
And the last one is the Monty on the Run (Kidsplay Edition) hack:
7 DATA 169,32,141,16,12,169,173,141,38,37,238,15,12,76,235,2,-1

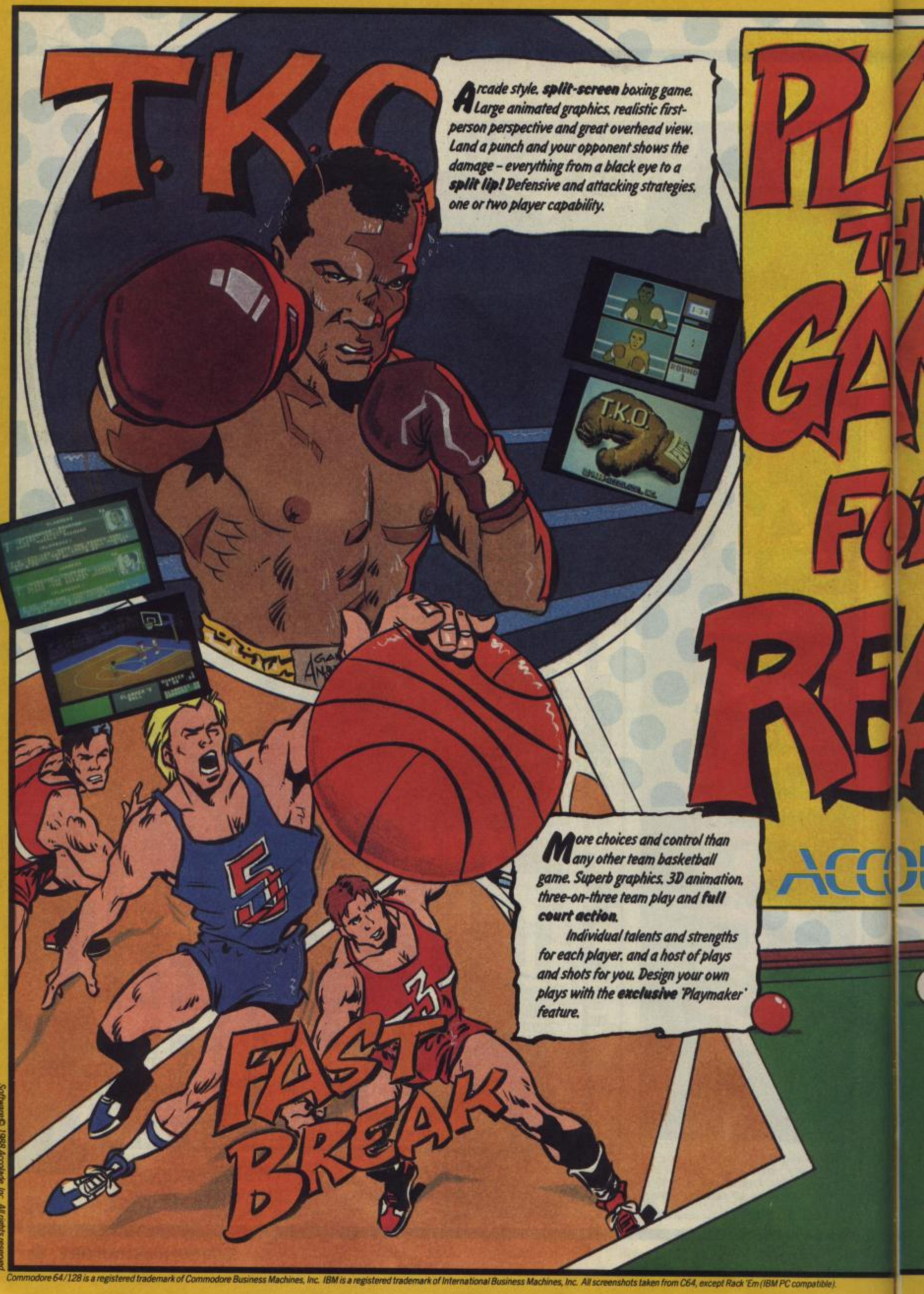
I'm sure I'm not responsible for this one. It looks like the ends of the important lines in the Train Robbers POKEs disappeared into some other dimension. To restart the action after the POKEs, type:
POKE 2048,162: POKE 2050,189: SYS 2048 (RETURN)

And finally (thank God!), the line containing the all-important SYS call was missing from the Firefly Mega Muzik Routine, which meant the hack did nothing at all! Type in the listing again, but insert the following line:
35 SYS 4608

Terribly sorry about that. You'll be pleased to know that I don't intend to make Klutz Korner a regular feature of PG's Tips, but, er, well, you never know.

Ok, then, without any further ado, let's get down to the tips, which this month includes an illustrated guide to Delta (rah, rah!), maps galore and loads of the usual hints, POKEs and cheat modes. Batteries to power, turbines to speed . . . let's go!

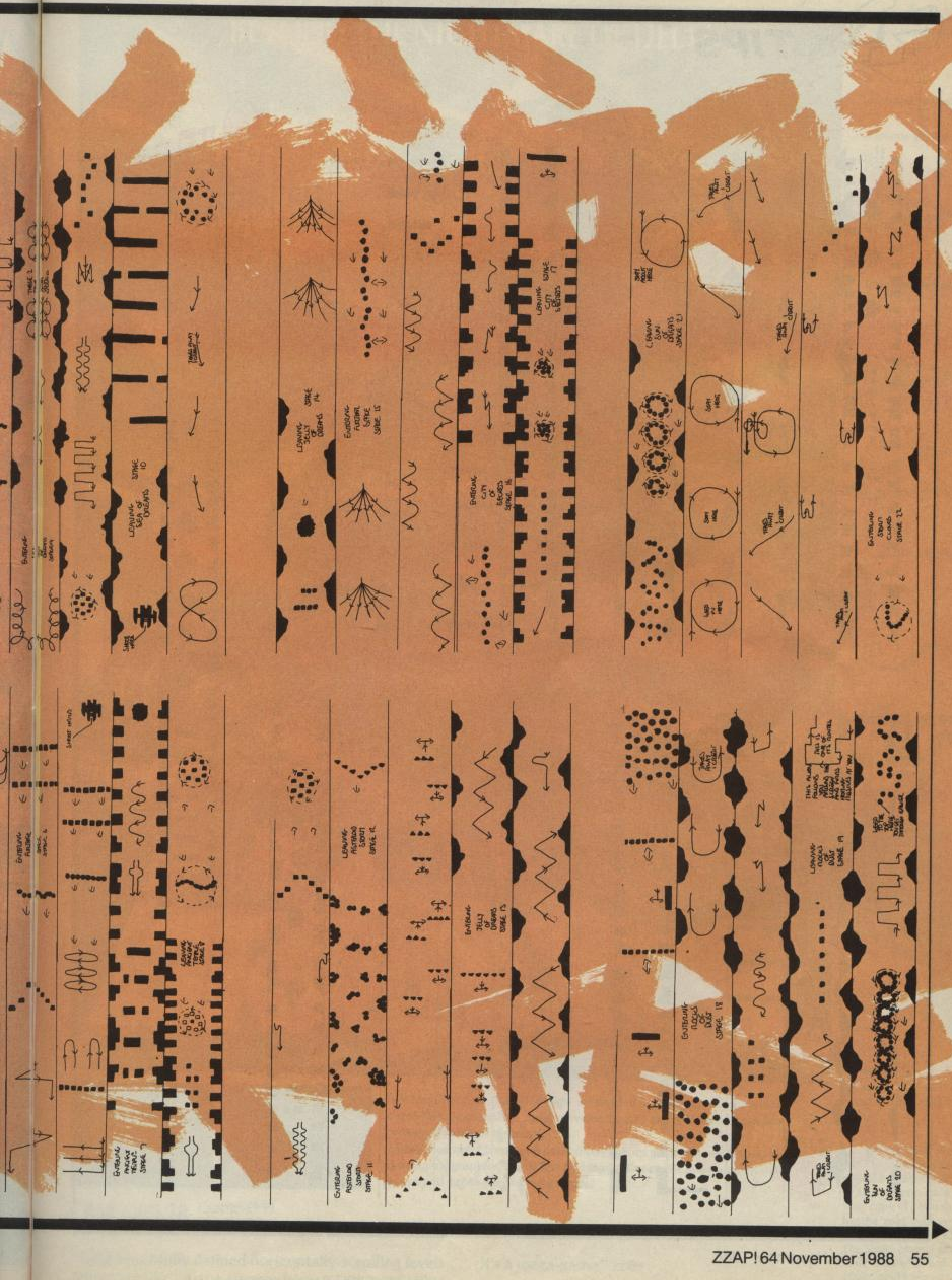

TO HELL AND BACK
MAPPED BY M. JARVIS
CRAYONED BY MEL FISHER

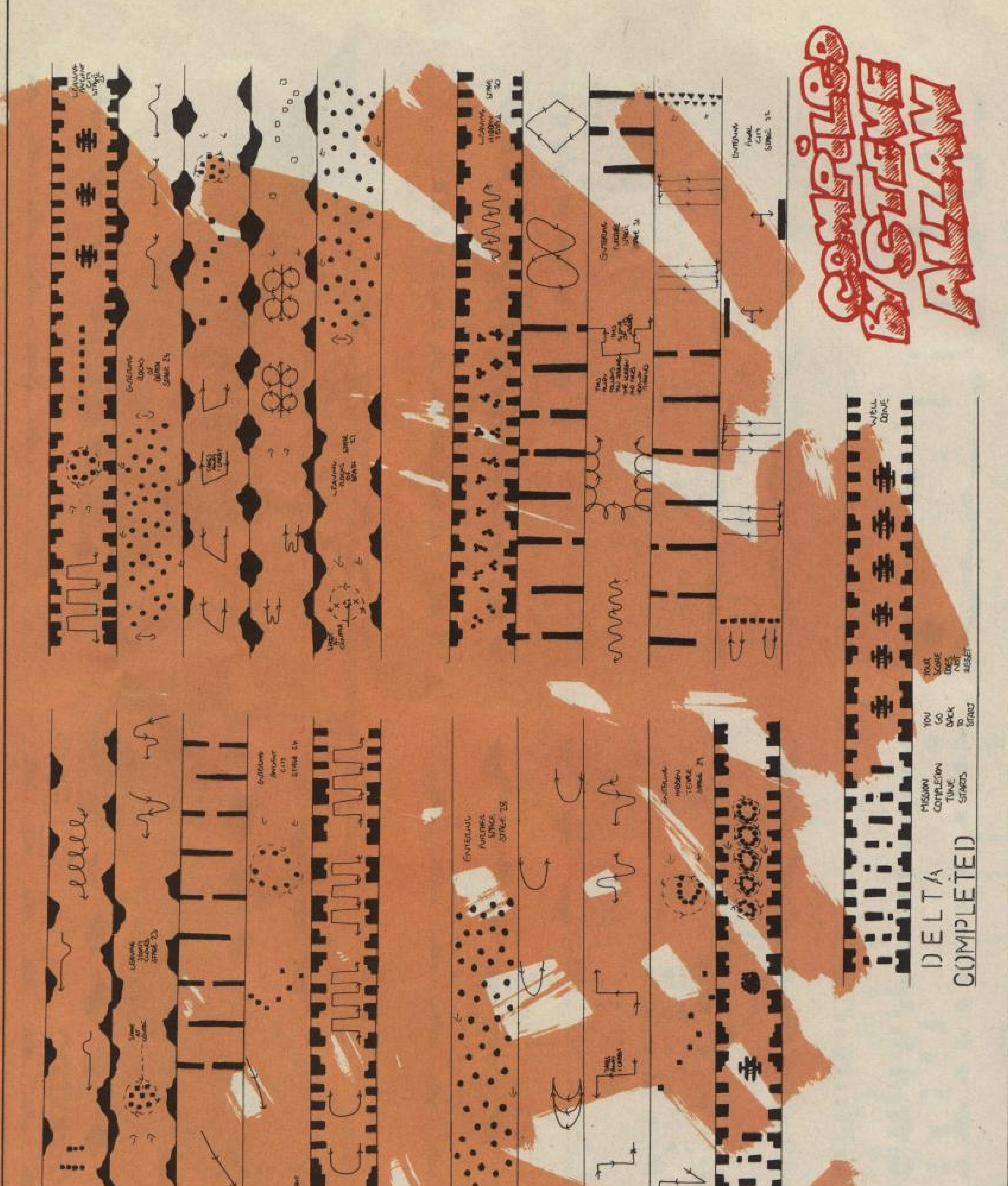

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MISSION COMPLETION TUNE STARTS
DELTA
COMPLETED



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THE SENTINEL (Firebird)

Here're some cosmopolitan POKEs for this superb game which happen to come from a Danish person, B Larsen and un Français qui s'appelle JCT. Unsurprisingly, you just LOAD the game, reset and type in either of the following sets of POKEs.

POKE4176,234:POKE 4177,234:POKE4217,76:POKE 4218, 114:POKE 4219,53 (RETURN)
POKE 12981,0:POKE 13685,76:POKE 13686,23:POKE 13687,16:POKE 34371,96 (RETURN)

This allows you to enter any landscape number and see the lie of the land and see the positions of any sentries. Alternatively, you could type

POKE 1212,12 (RETURN)
POKE 9462,173 (RETURN)
These two allow you to see through everything.

SYS 16128 (RETURN) restarts the game.



ROLLAROUND (Mastertronic)

Here's a sort of cheat mode for this jolly little budget game which comes from Andy Mawson of Blackley in Manchester. Just before you press the fire button to start the game hold down the f1 key, then press fire. Keep f1 pressed down and you should skip all the levels you have already completed.

RYGAR (US Gold)

This is one of the worst arcade conversions I've ever seen, ever, ever, ever. But if you really have nothing better to do (suicide?) dig it out again and have a go at this simple cheat from A Ridge of Bristol. If you get a shield and the level's time limit runs out before the shield limit does, you become invincible (almost). COR! BRILLIANT!!! (almost).

NIGHT RACER (Mastertronic)

How to make this game dead easy: LOAD it as normal, reset and type in the following instructions which come from Warren Pilkington of Manchester.
POKE 4979,0 (RETURN)
SYS 2064 (RETURN)
The game will now restart but the computer car's brakes will have been sabotaged, preventing it from getting off the start line. Now that's magic. Say, 'Yes, Paul'.

NETHERWORLD (Hewson)

Edwin Brouwes, from somewhere in Holland, sent in some POKEs for this rather nice game of crystal collecting. However, he forgot to include the SYS call so you'll need to use an Action Replay cartridge or something similar. As usual, LOAD the game and reset the computer, then select the POKE option and enter these:

POKE 12116,44 for unlimited lives
POKE 8138,0 for unlimited energy
POKE 7698,18 for unlimited time

Now restart the game and kick ass!

BARBARIAN (Psygnosis/Melbourne House)

Terherher . . . Pity about this game . . . Anyway, he said with a smirk on his face, from what I've heard from David Doll of Borehamwood and M Fox of West Drayton there's a really easy-to-use cheat mode. Just LOAD the game and on the opening screen press C. The screen should go red signifying that sprite collision is now no more. WHOOPEE!! (Sorry, but I'm easily excited). Furthermore, bridges will cease to vanish from beneath your feet; but be careful not to fall down pits, because your newly-found invincibility will leave you stranded at the bottom. Well, no-one said it was going to be easy.

TASK III (Databyte)

A couple of much-needed POKE here for this reeeeal mean space shoot 'em up, which unfortunately are only useful for anyone who owns a hacking cartridge (until someone sends me the SYS call). Paul of the X-Rayz is the person responsible for saving your joystick, and his advice is to LOAD the game as usual, access your cartridge's POKE option and . . . wait for it . . .

POKE 32086,173 for infinite lives
POKE 37180,0 to 15 to select any of the sixteen levels

HOPPIN' MAD (Elite)

Infinite balls (I'm going to say it . . . I'm going to say it . . . OOOOOOO-EEEERRRR!!!) and unlimited time can be yours, yes, yours, thanks to these Rebb POKEs. Our Dutch correspondent states that you only need LOAD up the game, reset and type in . . .

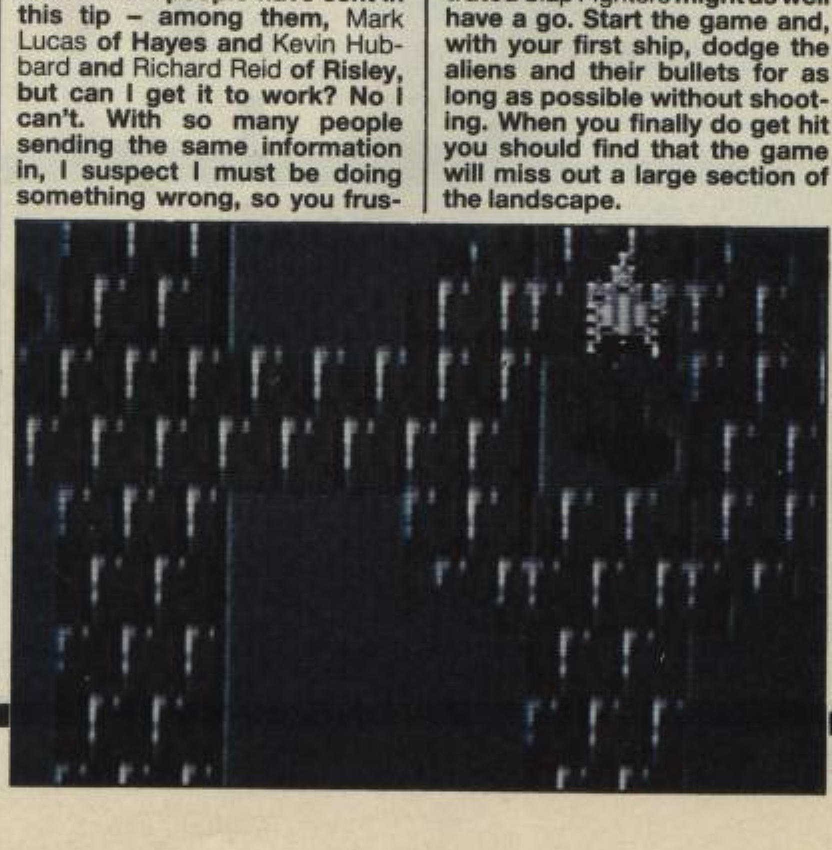
POKE 24447,165 (RETURN) For infinite lives
POKE 22797,165 (RETURN) For infinite time
SYS 20480 (RETURN) restarts the game

RICOCHET (Firebird)

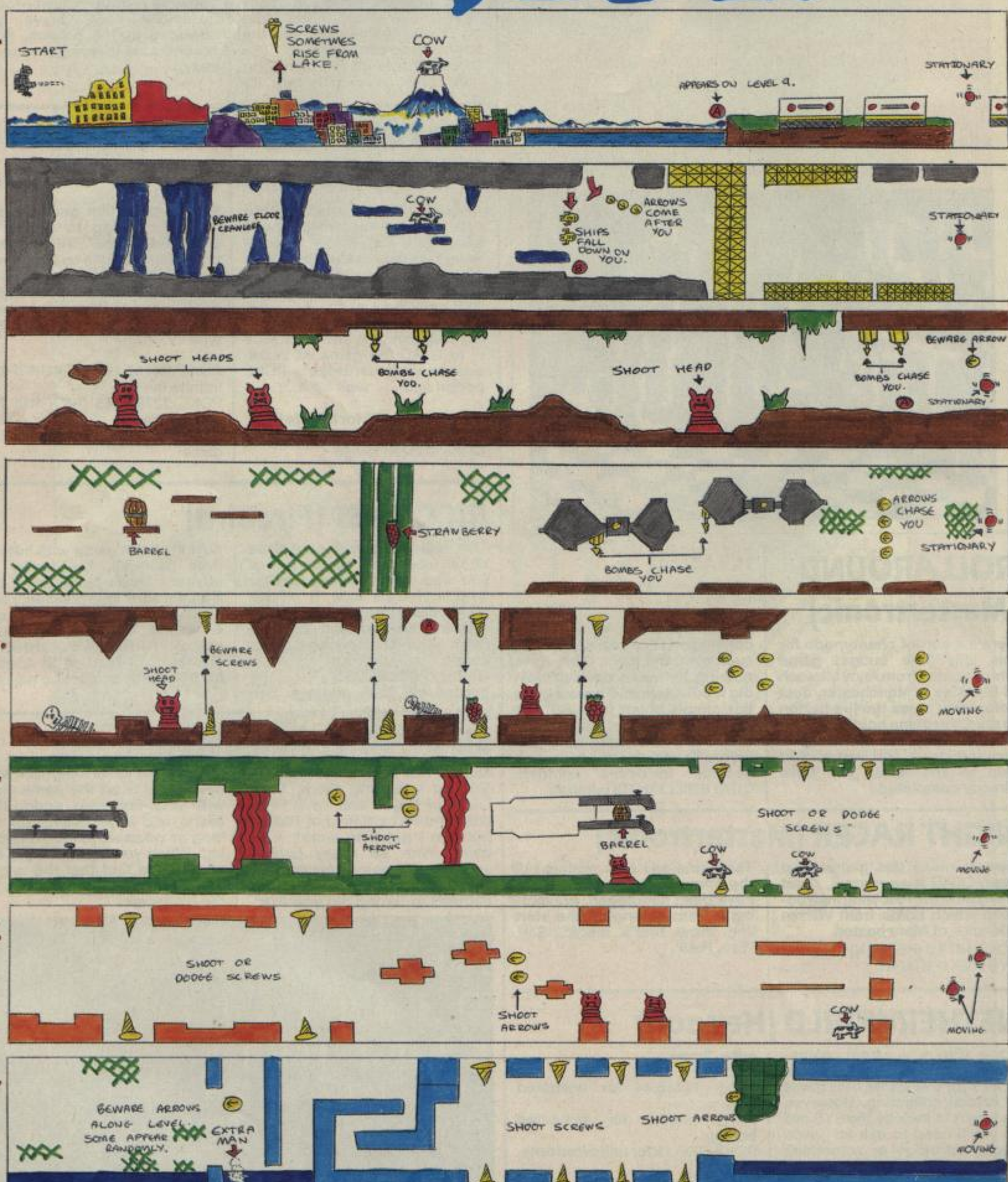
This is a pretty well-publicised cheat mode, but for the few of you who aren't already familiar with it, here's how it works. LOAD the game and go to the redefine keys option and set them all to 'Q'. Now type in the magic word – GARGLUVSBIGBOTS – the border will flash and you can now start the game with infinite lives (ooooh!), the ability to advance levels by pressing the Commodore key (aaaaah!) and even a screen designer accessed by pressing CLR-HOME (UUUWWAAAGHHH!!!). Thanks to S Trust of St Austell for that earth-shattering news.

SLAP FIGHT (Imagine)

Quite a few people have sent in this tip – among them, Mark Lucas of Hayes and Kevin Hubbard and Richard Reid of Risley, but can I get it to work? No I can't. With so many people sending the same information in, I suspect I must be doing something wrong, so you frustrated Slap Fighters might as well have a go. Start the game and, with your first ship, dodge the aliens and their bullets for as long as possible without shooting. When you finally do get hit you should find that the game will miss out a large section of the landscape.



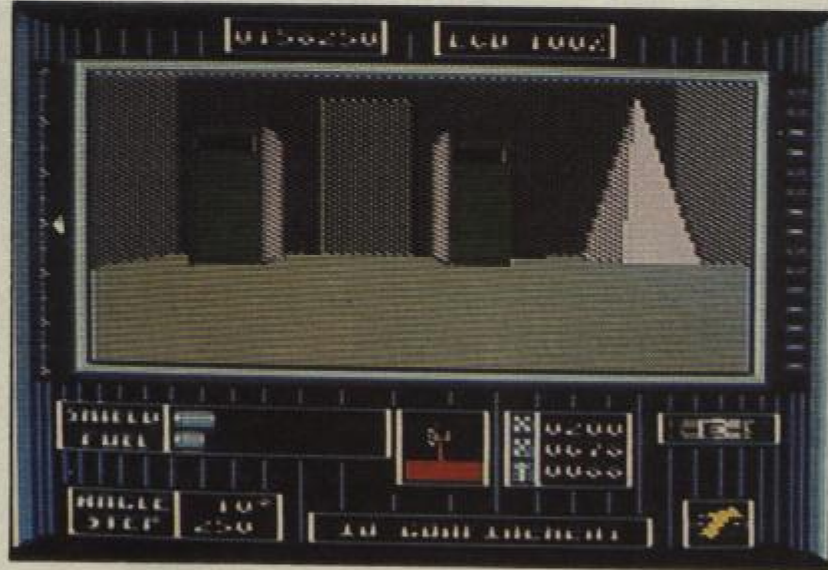
SIDE ARMS


1.
START
SCREWS SOMETIMES RISE FROM LAKE.
COW
APPEARS ON LEVEL 4.
STATIONARY
2.
BEWARE FLOOR CRAWLERS
COW
ARROWS COME AFTER YOU
SHIPS FALL DOWN ON YOU.
STATIONARY
3.
SHOOT HEADS
BOMBS CHASE YOU.
SHOOT HEAD
BOMBS CHASE YOU.
BEWARE ARROW
STATIONARY
4.
BARREL
STRAWBERRY
BOMBS CHASE YOU
ARROWS CHASE YOU
STATIONARY
5.
SHOOT HEAD
BEWARE SCREWS
MOVING
6.
SHOOT ARROWS
BARREL
COW
COW
SHOOT OR DODGE SCREWS
MOVING
7.
SHOOT OR DODGE SCREWS
SHOOT ARROWS
COW
MOVING
8.
BEWARE ARROWS ALONG LEVEL. SOME APPEAR RANDOMLY.
EXTRA MAN
SHOOT SCREWS
SHOOT ARROWS
MOVING

DARK SIDE (Incentive)

After those extensive tips in Issue 42 you shouldn't really be having too many problems with this game, but it always helps to have a few less limitations, such as those on fuel, time and shields. These Robert Troughton **POKEs give you an endless supply of all three – and all you have to do is** LOAD **the game, reset and type 'em in.**

POKE 26272,173:POKE 29005,173 (RETURN) **Unlimited time**
POKE 24891,173:POKE 24671,173 (RETURN) **Unlimited fuel**
POKE 26193,173:POKE 26221,173:POKE 29337,173 (RETURN) **Unlimited shield energy**
SYS 36096 (RETURN)



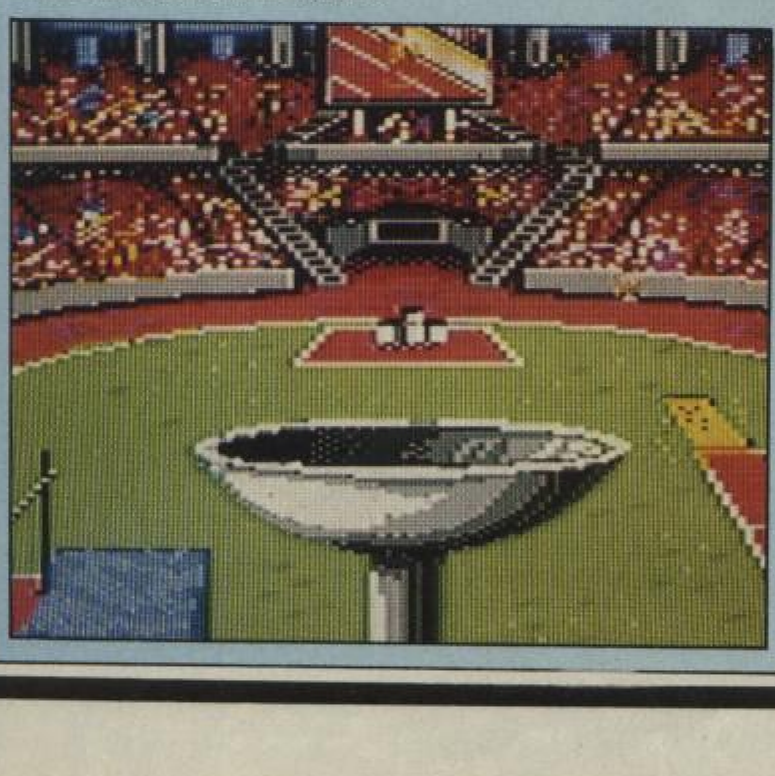
ROAD BLASTERS (US Gold)

Urgh! What did they do to my favourite arcade game? Oh, well, best not to think about it I s'pose . . . Now for you unfortunates who aren't doing at all well, here's a ridiculously simple cheat which first came from Simon Walklate **of Stoke but has since been sent in by numerous others, amongst them** Paul Mill **of Bristol. All you've got to do is pull back on the joystick when the low fuel warning appears. Your speed will remain constant, but your fuel won't run out. Alright, innit?**

SUMMER OLYMPIAD (Tynesoft)

Did you know that the train I take home actually goes past the offices of Tynesoft? If you did, why don't you ever wave? Humph, now, where was I . . . ? Oh, yes. Some tips for this new sports-sim which come from Warren Pilkington**. The instructions don't give much away so you should find these quite helpful.**

SKEET SHOOTING – **The main tip here is** DON'T PANIC! **You should spend a few goes learning the sequence of skeets, so that you can predict where the next one is going to appear and position your reticle** (OOOER! **sorry, don't know why I said that) so that the skeet moves into it. Also, always remember that you have two shots.**
FENCING – **The easiest way to beat the computer is to move up to the opposing swordsman then keep pressing up and fire, followed by a push to the right. The distance is crucial because if you're too close to your opponent you won't hit him, so watch his ripostes – if they seem to be going under your arm, move backwards a little.**
TRIPLE JUMP – **Nothing to it, really – just don't waggle too fast as that's just as ineffective as going too slow. Take off as near to the line as possible at an angle close to 45° and you should end up with a leap of around 19.5 metres.**
DIVING – **Score over 70 points with ease by using the following joystick manoeuvres: right, left & fire, right & fire, left, right, up then down. If you want to make it a bit trickier and really impress the judges, push the joystick left instead of right for your first move.**
HURDLES – **This is all down to timing, basically, so don't waggle like mad. Just keep a moderately fast rhythm of running and jumping going until the end, then put on a spurt at the end to make sure you're in first place.**



PACLAND (Grandslam)

Having a few probs with cramp in your arms after trying to jump those really enormous lakes? Well, things can be a lot less tiring if you have a Competition Pro Extra joystick. Just jump off the springboard then engage the joystick's slow mode and you should float across to the other side with the minimum of effort! That tip was brought to you by the Trevor Fisher **Rubber Company of Prestwich in Manchester.**

BALL BLASTA (Zeppelin)

This is a canny game and no mistake. For unlimited bats for player one just LOAD **up the game as usual, close your eyes, fumble around for the reset button, then press it. Now type in the following** POKEs **which comes to you from the legendary** Varkanoid **and** JOG **of** SUB-ZERO**. Oh, yes, it helps to open your eyes again at this point.**

POKE 6108,173 (RETURN) **Infinite bats**
SYS 15808 (RETURN) **To see the end sequence**
SYS 52992 (RETURN) **or**
SYS 2560 (RETURN) **To restart**

BIONIC COMMANDO (Go!)

The Lads **of Belfast have discovered a petite cheat in this rather nifty game. Just** LOAD **the game as usual, start playing and collect an extra weapon. Now quit the game and restart. You should now find you are still equipped with that selfsame weapon. Good, no?**

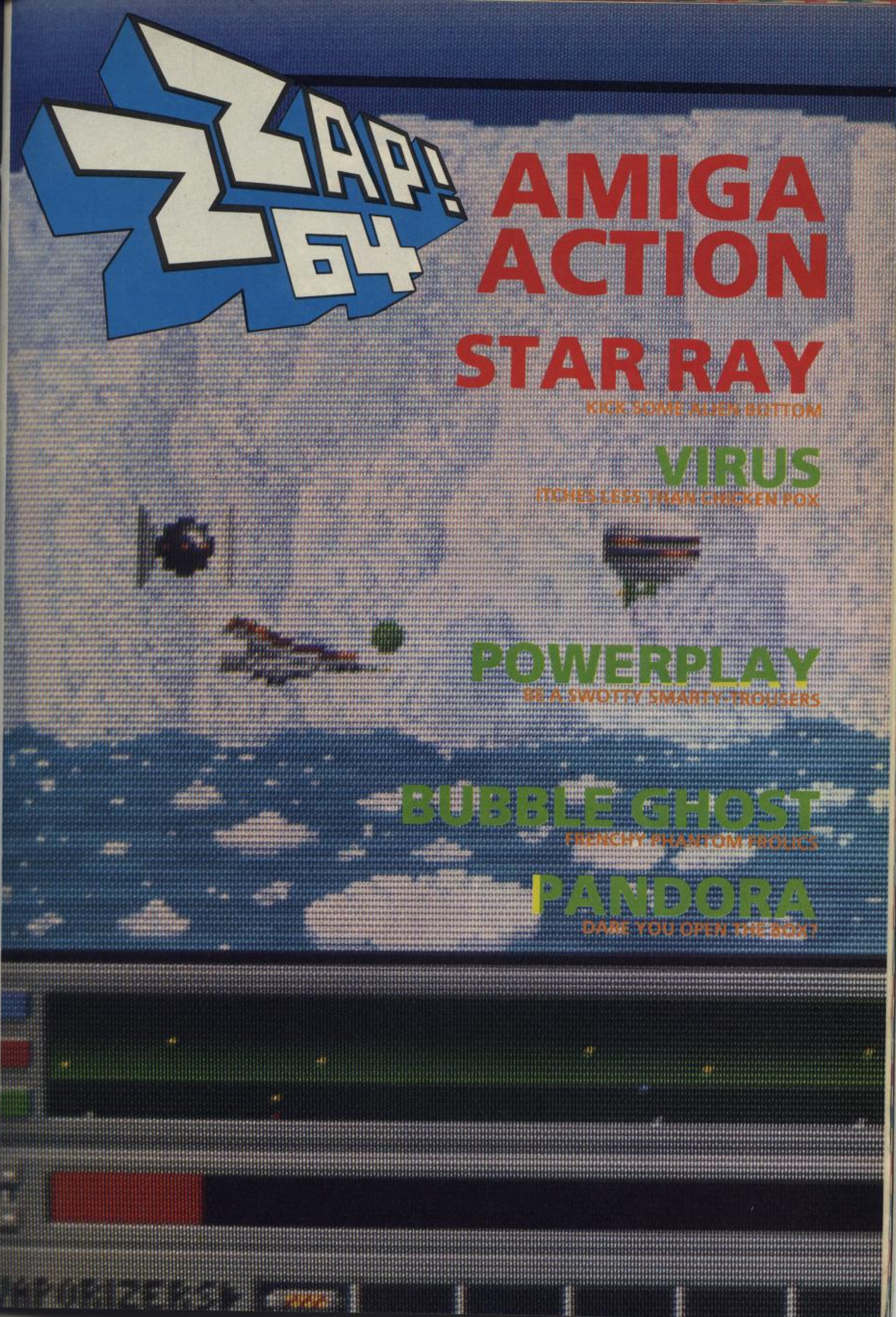


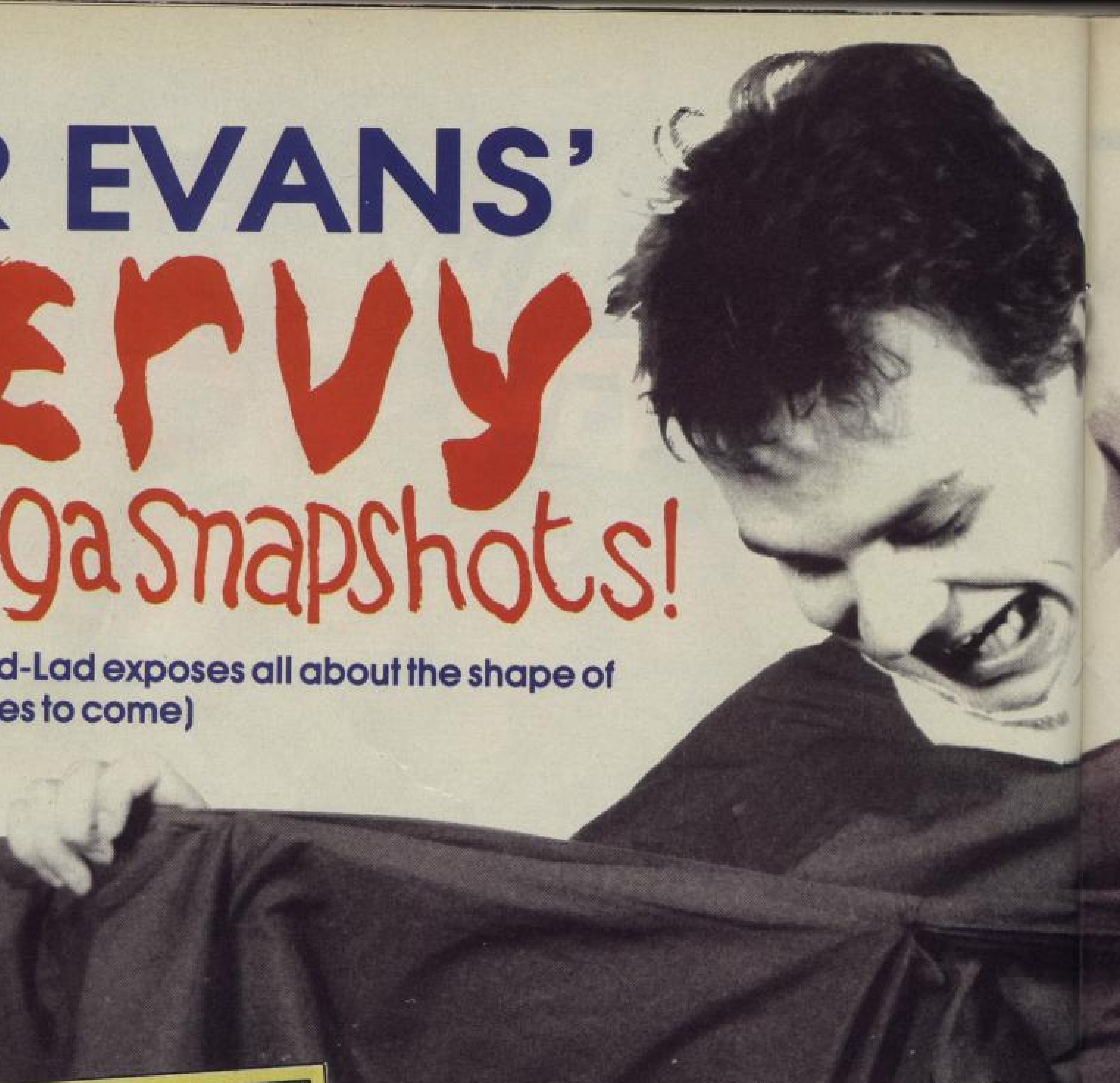
Well, that's that. Thanks to all of this month's contributors, especially Steven Allan **and** Warren Pilkington **who both win £30 of software as Cartographer of the Month and Tipster of the Month respectively. I'll have loads more tips, maps, POKEs and stuff in next month's** Huge, Gi-Normous, Is-That-Big-or-What? Christmas Special **(ie, it's over 200 pages long . . . Aaargh! All that unpaid overtime!), so watch out for that. Must go now, as Kati, our new Ass Ed, is aiming a water pistol directly between my eyes. Maybe I shouldn't keep referring to her as 'Pet' . . . ? Mumble, mumble . . .**


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After abandoning the ship you capture an ADREC in order to continue advancing on the planet. A dagger is the sole weapon you rely on to fend off the inhabitants. You fight against the enemy troops. You have to steal a weapon. And advance forward, straight ahead. Nothing can detain you.
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You cross swamps, mountains and forests... there are enemies all over. The way to the prison becomes more hazardous the further you advance. You take command of a helicopter, descend into the entrails of the planet, and arrive at the prison. It is heavily guarded. Will you be capable of freeing ARKOS?.
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DR EVANS' Pervy amiga snapshots!

(Maff the Rad-Lad exposes all about the shape of Amiga games to come)



SPEEDBALL (Imageworks)

The Bitmap Brothers, programmers of the hugely successful *Xenon* (soon to be released for the 64), are set to release *Speedball*, their first game on Mirrorsoft's new label. It's a futuristic ball-sport, apparently influenced by the film *Rollerball*, combining traditional ball-game characteristics with shoot 'em up action, requiring you to jostle for the ball or blast your opponent to smithereens with your weaponry (cor!) Throughout the game you will find tokens on the floor of the arena, giving better speed or weapons to help you defeat your opponent. Imageworks are due to release *Speedball* in mid November at a price of £24.99. Let's hope it's as good as *Xenon*, guys.



OFF-SHORE WARRIOR (Titus)

As in Titus' last release (*Fire And Forget*), *Off-shore Warrior* pits you in a 3D 'race to the death whilst blasting everyone else to bits' format, only this time the action takes place on the water. It's set in the year 2050, and you must compete in the race (or battle, whichever you think is more appropriate) for the entertainment of the gathered crowds, as a test of your manhood (growl!). *Off-Shore Warrior* should be released by the time you read this, but you'll have to wait for the ZZAP! review to see what it's like.



FUSION (Electronic Arts)

Designed in the UK by Bullfrog Productions, *Fusion* places you on a strange alien world, the home planet of a vicious and marauding race. You must find the pieces to construct a powerful bomb with which to annihilate the race. To negotiate the planet, you have control over an assault crawler or a fast and manoeuvrable mothership, both of which are needed to search the whole planet. *Fusion* looks very pretty indeed and has an atmospheric soundtrack which sounds well powerful and violent. The game should be available in October, costing £24.95



EDDIE EDWARDS SUPER-SKI (Loriciels)

Released by a company called Microids, *Eddie Edwards Super-Ski* is a 3D skiing simulation (I bet that came as a surprise). Up to six players can take part in the four events, including downhill, slalom and, of course, the ski jump. The game sports some very nice alpine graphics and promises interesting and exciting action. Whether it will live up to these promises remains to be seen, but the guardians of decent software reviews here at ZZAP! will discover the true nature of the game, defending the public from sub-standard software, ever alert in the search . . . (Oh, shut up!)



BATTLE CHESS (Electronic Arts)

Another imminent release from Electronic Arts is *Battle Chess*, a complex interpretation of the traditional boardgame by American programming team Interplay (renowned for their *Bard's Tale* series). As you would expect from a chess game, there is a lot of strategic play required, but the programmers have incorporated animated arcade combat sequences. As you can see from the screenshot, the graphics are very detailed and promise another intriguing Interplay release. *Battle Chess* should be around by Christmas at a price of (surprise, surprise) £24.95.

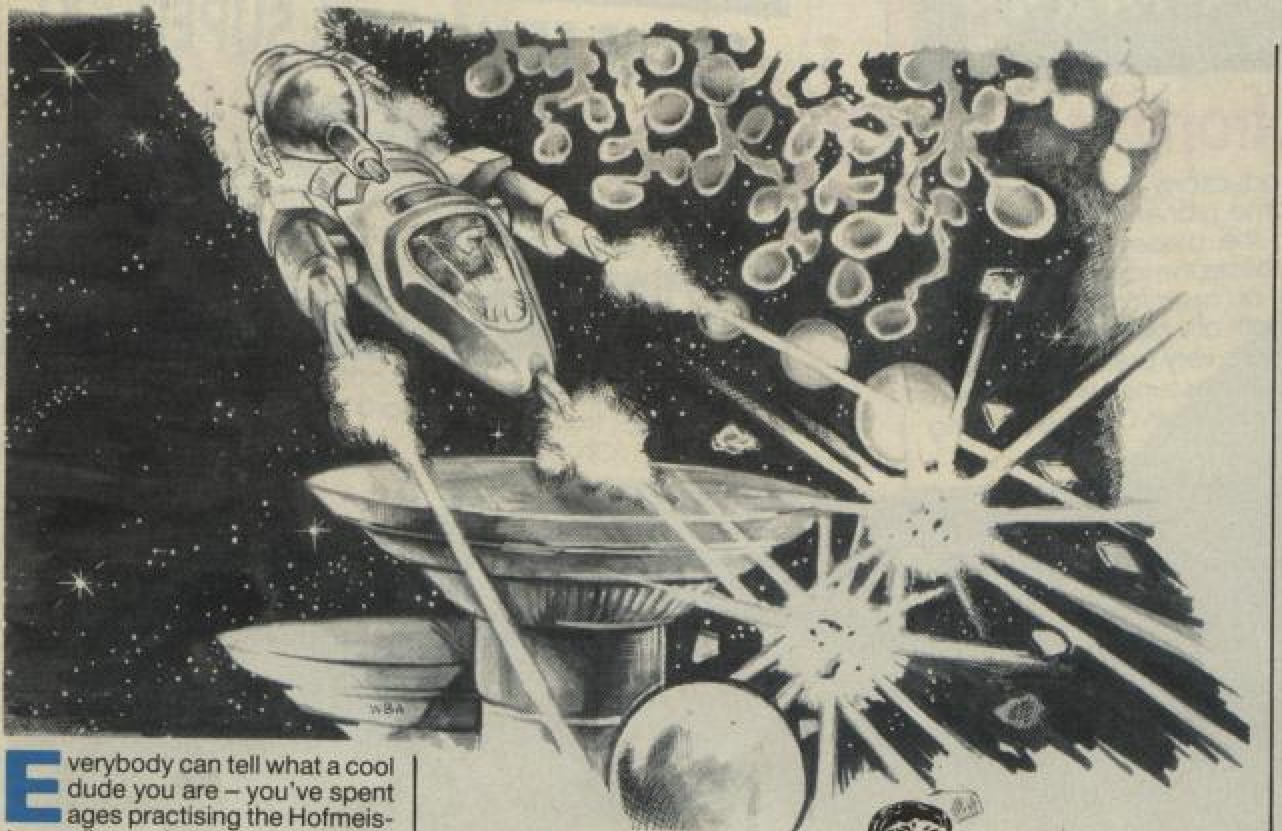


I,LUDICRUS (Actual Screenshots)

The first release from CRL subsidiary, Actual Screenshots, is a cartoon-gladiator beat 'em up in the style of such cartoon strips as *BC* and *The Wizard of Id*. We've only seen a demo involving the first enemy, but if the gameplay and further enemies match up to the incredible animation of the demo, we could be in for a real treat. Release details aren't known at the time of writing, but *I Ludicrus* looks worthy of further investigation.

SARCOPHASER

Rainbow Arts, £14.95 disk



Everybody can tell what a cool dude you are – you've spent ages practising the Hofmeister walk, you've got the shades and the leather, the jeans and the cap – so what's missing? What's gonna get everyone *really* looking at you?

Let's see . . . hmm, a pineapple print shirt, ghetto blaster, dinky electronic Fil-o-fax (no), Spectrum, soya beans, soap on a string, spaceship . . . Spaceship! Now that sounds more like it. So, what are you waiting for – jump into your nearest Rainbow Arts customised Sarcophaser (easy enough to find) and get blasting.

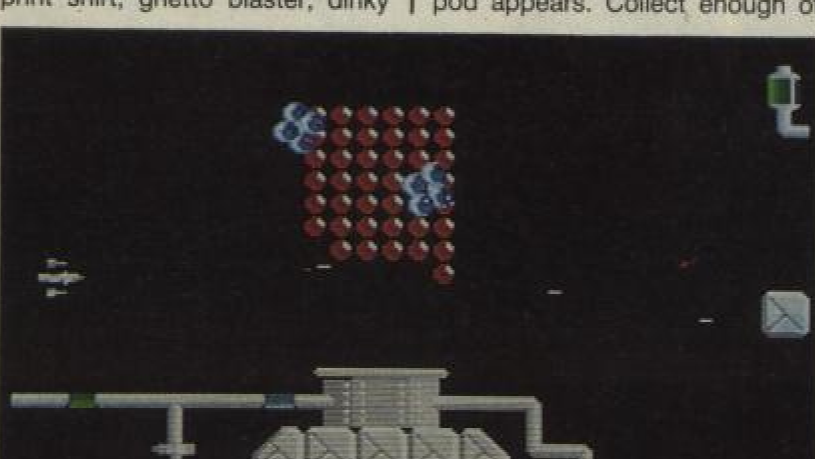
If you manage to wipe out a wave of aliens (nasty multicoloured flying thingies that belch bullets), avoiding upward thrusting enemy tendrils, failing to hit rocky outcrops by the skin of your teeth and blasting bonus bubbles out of the way, an energy pod appears. Collect enough of these pods and you can choose to array your lean, mean fighting machine with an awesome array of interstellar weaponry: turbo-power, extra fire, backward blasters, whiz weapons and bombs. Get enough firepower and you can even toggle between spray–bullets and great big enormous massive mega shoot.



OK, so the first stage doesn't look particularly exciting, but the rest of Sarcophaser definitely makes up for it. The graphics are classy, the whiz bomb, back shot and speed up weapons make for plenty of variety and the whole process is so tricky that it's bound to keep you pumping adrenalin. When you've been blasted from the sky (Peking duck style) for the fifteenth time, it does get a bit annoying that you have to wait for the title music and the picture to load before every single go (yawn) but in the end it's worth the wait. I still think that £14.95 is just a bit too much to ask for what doesn't amount to much more than a top-quality budget-style game which doesn't even have in-game music. As it stands, Sarcophaser is great – at £9.99 it would have been brilliant!



Have you noticed the great amount of shoot 'em ups being reviewed in ZZAP! recently? I think it's great because I really like shoot 'em ups (really, Maff? – Ed), and Sarcophaser is a good one. The title music is pleasant, with some very nice minor chord changes to give a very eerie feel to the game. The in-game graphics and sound aren't that brilliant, though. The sprites are a little small and feebly coloured and some of the sounds are . . . well, rubbish, to be quite honest: the alien gunshot sounds like a bad case of TB! Despite these handicaps, Sarcophaser still manages to deliver the goods required of a shoot 'em up – fast action and addictive gameplay (well I think they're the important bits and I'm doing this comment!). The game isn't that expensive at fifteen quid – in fact that's rather cheap for a Rainbow Arts game – so I advise you to check it out before shelling out for that £25 Breakout variant.



▲ **Scramble! Defend yourself! Prepare to meet your nemesis in our type of shoot 'em up**

▼ **Well – isn't THAT a huuuuge end-of-level alien? Cor blimey, guv'nor**



Every now and again you come face to face with a mamma alien of huge fighting proportions. Shoot this missile burping monstrosity, without coming a cropper on her extensively protected spiky armour plate, and you could be on your way to becoming as cool as you look . . . well almost.





With so many programmers going hell for leather to create revolutionary games for the Amiga, it makes a pleasant change to have a simple-minded blast-up for review. The game's sprites and backdrops are only remarkable for their gaudy flatness, and most of the sound effects sound like they're sampled from a Western starring an asthmatic cowboy. Luckily, addictive gameplay does a lot to makes up for all this: plenty of aliens to shoot and plenty of weapons to shoot them with, make for fast and furious action which keeps you on your toes every step of the way. The only periods of nerve relaxation are the face-offs with the end of level aliens – by the time you meet them you're usually so tooled-up that a few seconds of frenzied firing are all it takes to dispatch them! At this price, though, such shortcomings are easily excusable and I'd say Sarcophaser **is well worth further investigation.**

PRESENTATION 73%
Smooth controls and selection systems marred by a laborious loading sequence between games.

GRAPHICS 82%
Unoriginal ship, carefully detailed backdrops.

SOUND 50%
Pathetic in-game effects fail to live up to the funky title music.

HOOKABILITY 88%
One blast and you're hooked.

LASTABILITY 81%
Multiple weapons systems and carefully graded difficulty ensure hours of infuriatingly addictive play.

OVERALL 84%
A top-quality low-price action-packed shoot 'em up with excellent graphics. Miss it if you dare.

WHIRLIGIG

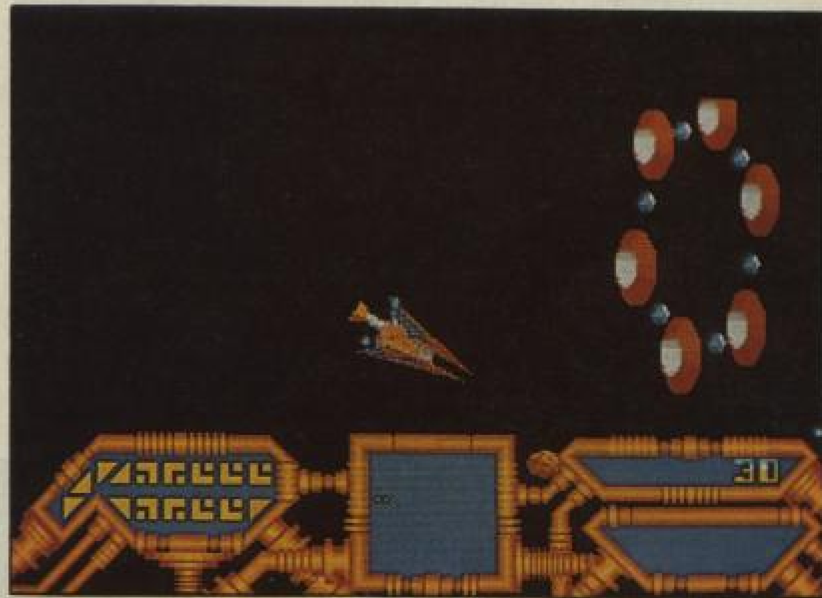
Rainbird, £24.95 disk

Scientists have discovered a whole new network of universes. As each universe acted like a section of ordinary space, these areas were dubbed 'realspace' or 'Eigenspace'. Between them lie spacial warps, which are linked by gates to the Eigenspaces, rather like a funhouse maze. For this reason the network was dubbed the *Whirligig*.

Well, if you understood all that then it's probably time for a rest in your rubber room! What the game entails is a search through some 4,000,000,000 spacial spheres (aaargh! That's nine zeros!) to find the five tracts of Perfect Space wherein reside the Perfect Solids, which will yield the secret of time travel. With this, you can go back in the fourth dimension to a point in the cosmos untouched by squalid lifestyles and apocalyptic wars in space. Apparently, that point is on Earth in the year 1988.

Each level is chock-a-block with malevolent aliens who will stop at very little to get your craft disintegrating into the ether. Luckily, your Meson class fighter has two defence mechanisms – homing missiles and chaff pods which are a form of intelligent mine. Fire a missile when nothing is around, though, and it might just lock on to your own ship and blast you up the impulse engines!

Missiles, chaff and fuel are all in limited supply, so one trip through a packed Eigenspace can leave your reserves low, forcing you to restock at supply depots.



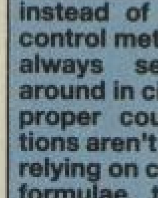
▲ **Penetrate that hole and you'll enter another universe of pleasure**



Guiding your ship through a stargate places you in gatespace through which you are transported to the next sector; the network of numbered Eigenspaces and stargates is based on certain rudimentary mathematical relationships and formulae. The key to success is to use these to plot optimum routes to the five areas of Perfect Space, numbered 6, 28, 496, 8,128 and 33,550,336. *Space Invaders* was never like this!



This review has been really hard to write. The game is difficult and confusing, the instructions are tedious beyond belief and there is no story to work from. What was I supposed to do? But now the easy bit; what do I actually think? Well to be quite honest, I hate it! **The layout of the game is very much like one of the 'traditional'** Star Trek **games with the addition of a shoot 'em up. Now, this would be alright if the** Star Trek**-like bits were controllable and the shoot 'em up bits were playable – but they're not. Instead the status screens are all front and the ship-blasting sections are incredibly difficult, often to the point of frustration. Why Maelstrom decided to use a 'continuous' rotation system instead of an** Asteroids **type control method I don't know. I always seemed to whizz around in circles trying to fly a proper course. The instructions aren't very helpful either, relying on clever-clever maths formulae to fill the space rather than giving useful information. There's nothing more I can say except that I** really **dislike this game.**



Ever since Lords of Midnight **Mike Singleton has made a selling point of packing loads of locations into his games, and** Whirligig **is no different. I have to say, though, that for all its four billion levels and fancy spinning graphics,** Whirligig **just isn't very playable. Progressing through dozens of Eigenspaces which don't radically vary in their content is tedious enough, but the boredom is exaggerated by lengthy pauses between levels. Ship control is also a real pain in the neck, as the mouse is just too vague for the control method. I'm sure** Whirligig **is technically terribly clever, and the mathematical structure of the game is intriguing, but whether it's worth shelling out £25 to play is highly questionable.**

PRESENTATION 34%
Packed with annoying delays, the control method is unruly and the instructions extremely vague.

GRAPHICS 57%
Large and well defined, but lacking in variety.

SOUND 73%
A pleasing, if inappropriate, soundtrack – but spot effects lack imagination.

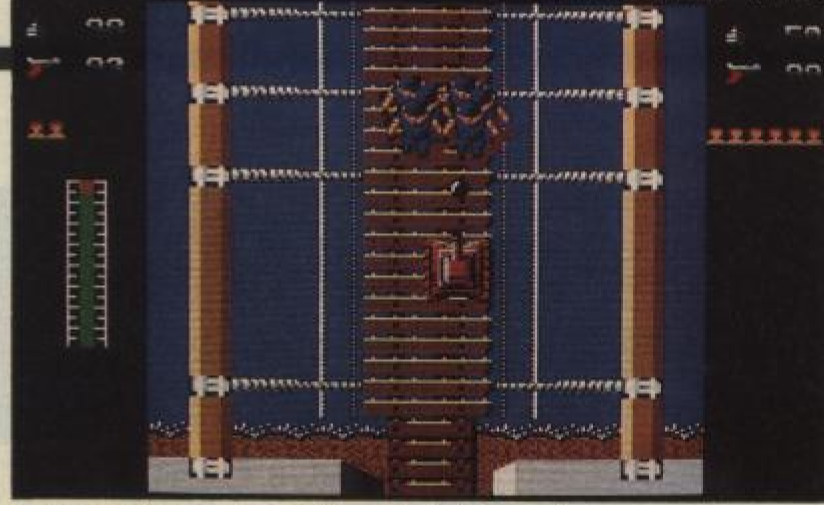
HOOKABILITY 22%
If you can understand the instructions after about a week then you *might* get somewhere.

LASTABILITY 31%
Four billion similar levels do not compulsive gaming make!

OVERALL 38%
Technically clever, but that's the problem. It's *too* clever.

16-BIT

IKARI WARRIORS



▲ No need to shoot those soldiers – just drive over 'em!

Elite, £24.99 disk

A dynamic duo of crack commandos have received a desperate may-day plea from a commander of the US forces, who has been captured by a vicious 'n' nasty group of revolutionaries. Unfortunately, their plane crashes before reaching its intended destination (perhaps our hasty heroes should have remembered to take a pilot with them), leaving miles of hostile, soldier-infested jungle between them and General Bonn. The only available course of action is to hack a path through the undergrowth.

You and a friend take up the story in simultaneous two-player shoot 'em up action (wild-eyed loners are catered for by a one-man frenzied fire 'n' fight option). The vertically scrolling jungle scenes reveal enemy bunkers, bridges, forts and gun emplacements amongst the natural features of rivers, sandbanks and various types of foliage – jam-packed with guerilla soldiers, tanks and helicopters.

Foot soldiers can be killed with a single bullet but hostile vehicles and outposts need to be tackled by grenade. Both types of ammunition are limited. Luckily, destroying gun emplacements or red soldiers leaves a flashing icon, which can provide extra supplies and firepower and bonus lives or fuel.

Fuel prolongs the life of empty tanks boarded by the warrior. They are easily identifiable by the word 'IN' on their turret (apparently big flashing neon signs are the height of fashion for the tank-about-jungle this summer). Once aboard, you are impervious to bullets but a grenade or enemy shell will irreparably damage your tank (a plume of smoke emerges from the turret). You only have a few seconds to bail out before you're blown into small, gristly pieces.

Isn't war hell?



You might think that a version of Ikari Warriors **released six months after the 64 version (itself already a year late) would be not worth much attention. However, if you liked the arcade version, and can consider shelling out £25 for an almost identical copy, this is for you. The audio effects aren't all that good, but the graphics are spot on, and the action fast and furious. Without putting too fine a point on it, this is almost like having the arcade game on your own computer. The difficulty level is set perfectly, so that you just progress enough to want to have another go. It's not the best game on the Amiga, nor does it fully justify its high price tag, but if you're looking for some simple** Commando**-style maiming, buy it.**



Ever since I saw Ikari Warriors **in the arcades, I hoped someone would release a home version. My hopes were raised when Elite announced that they were due to release a 64 version back in November 1986, a little while before the game actually appeared (snigger!) to an enthusiastic reception. Now we have the Amiga conversion, with its improved graphics and sound – and thankfully the enjoyable gameplay has been retained. The graphics are very good, perfectly capturing the feel of the coin-op original. The difficulty is set just about right, allowing you to progress a little further with each game, so that your interest is maintained over a long period of time.** Ikari Warriors **is an excellent arcade conversion and a cracking game in its own right.**



Death! Murder! Maim! Kill! Disfigure! (Excuse me while I psyche myself up for this critique). UUUWWYYAAGHH!! (That's better). As you can tell, it takes a lot to rouse the homicidal maniac in me, and Ikari Warriors **comes reasonably close to achieving that. The machine-gunning action has a definite bloody appeal and, as usual, two-player action boosts the playability no end. It's fortunate that gameplay is so strong, in fact, as the graphics are rather too jolly to create the necessary air of menace, and the military soundtrack isn't really very rousing. Still, fans of the arcade game should be well pleased to hear that the joystick control benefits greatly from the absence of the coin-op's unwieldy twist joystick. At this price, I would hardly call** Ikari Warriors **an essential purchase, but it has much to offer hardened arcadesters.**

▼ Yomping through jungle terrain is no hassle for an *Ikari Warrior*



PRESENTATION 77%
Standard arcade options with the addition of pause and restart facilities.

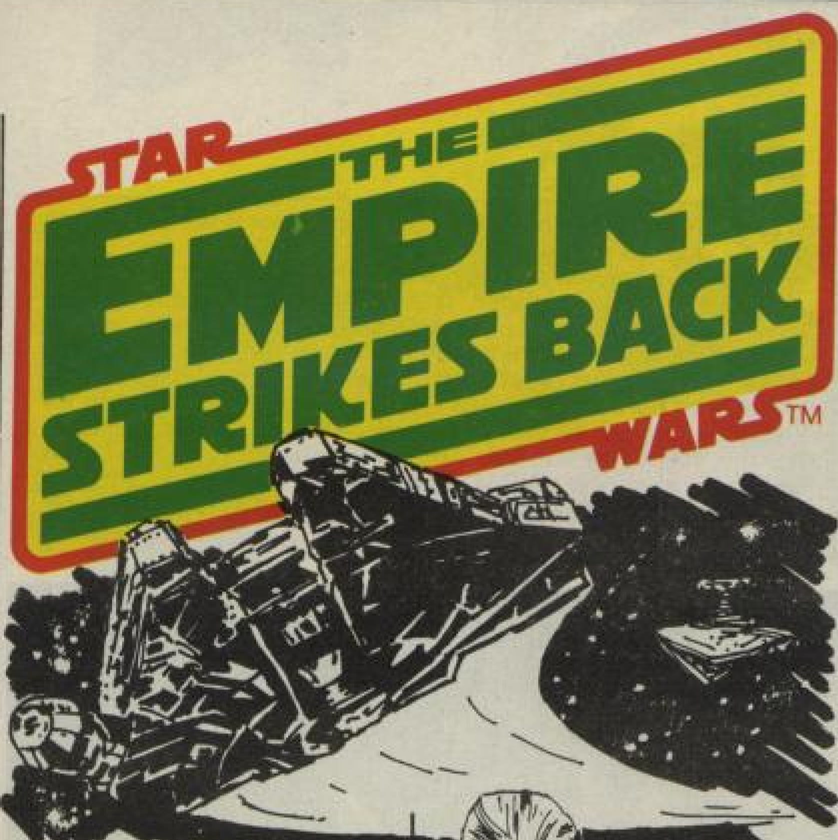
GRAPHICS 75%
Accurate reproductions of the arcade original's, so they do look slightly dated.

SOUND 69%
Competently programmed but unfortunately it only mimics the repetitive coin-op tunes.

HOOKABILITY 85%
The mixture of jungle running and tank driving is difficult but enjoyable to play.

LASTABILITY 71%
Exploration of ever-deeper parts of the jungle is brilliantly addictive.

OVERALL 74%
An accurate conversion of an old but playable *Commando* variant, but a high price to pay.



The Empire Strikes Back

Domark, £19.99 disk

Back in the old days, if you wanted to be like Luke Skywalker, you had to grow your hair long, spend hours perfecting a wide-eyed goofy grin and use a broom handle for a light sabre. Imaginative? Maybe. Cool? Absolutely not.

Just when your reputation was really at an all-time low, the conversion of *Star Wars* appeared. Coping with that was a sinch. Question is, can you still cope when *The Empire Strikes Back*?

Your main objective sounds dead simple: reach the protective safety of a huge asteroid. Trouble is, you only have five shields and you've to survive four levels of danger first. Get hold of your nearest snowspeeder because first of all you play the part of Luke. Probots are trying to transmit pictures of the Rebels' power generator to Darth Vader and you've got to try to shoot them first.

Immediately, you're face-to-face with small AT-ST and huge AT-AT walkers: you've got a limited number of tow cables to fire before you make it to the rebel base. Next, look cool, because Han Solo's in the hot-seat next. The Millenium Falcon is under attack from Imperial TIE fighters – if he manages to blast them out of the way all Han has to cope with is the asteroid field. Easier said than done: every collision involves the loss of one whole shield.

Hit a certain number of targets on each level and you're awarded a JEDI letter. Collect all four, and you attain true Jedi Force, a power which makes you invincible against all Dark Side enemies for a limited amount of time.

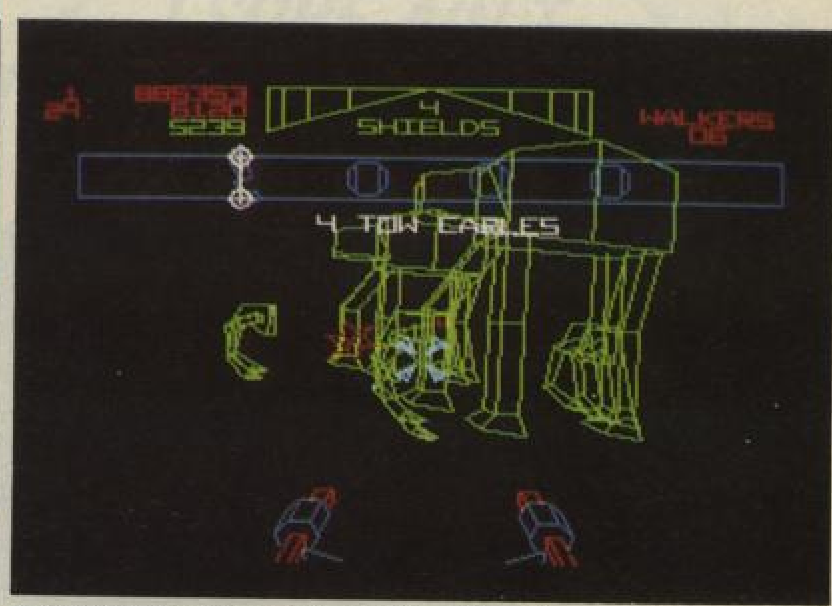
So, put that in your pipe and smoke it, Darth.



Hurrah! one of my favourite arcade machines (not that you see them much nowadays) converted to the Amiga. It's not quite as good as the original – the vector graphics are just a tad too slow for that – but who cares when you can zoom through the sky shouting out 'Death to the Empire' and 'Kill Darth Vader' at the top of your voice . . . er . . . preferably, when there's no-one else in the room. Being able to use the mouse is a definite improvement over messing about with a sluggish joystick, and really recreates the atmosphere of the arcades. The only real disappointment is the sound – surely the Amiga could have provided us with a bit more than a Chewbacca roar and one or two sampled squirts? Still, I'd rather play this than any other Empire conversion I've seen. In fact, I think I'll have another go . . .



Cor! Another superb conversion in the Star Wars trilogy – not only is it the best film of the three, it's also the best arcade game. The variety is what makes it so enjoyable – one minute you're poncing around gaining a 20,000 point bonus flying through the legs of the AT-ATs, the next you're swaying left and right in your seat trying to avoid the nerve-wracking asteroid field! There's so many extras that monotony doesn't apply as much as it did in the original Star Wars – the gaining of Jedi status, shooting probots for points and attempting to stop each wave reaching a goal, just blasting the hell out of everything – it's great! Maybe it's simply because it's got that huge name behind it, but The Empire Strikes Back is brilliant.

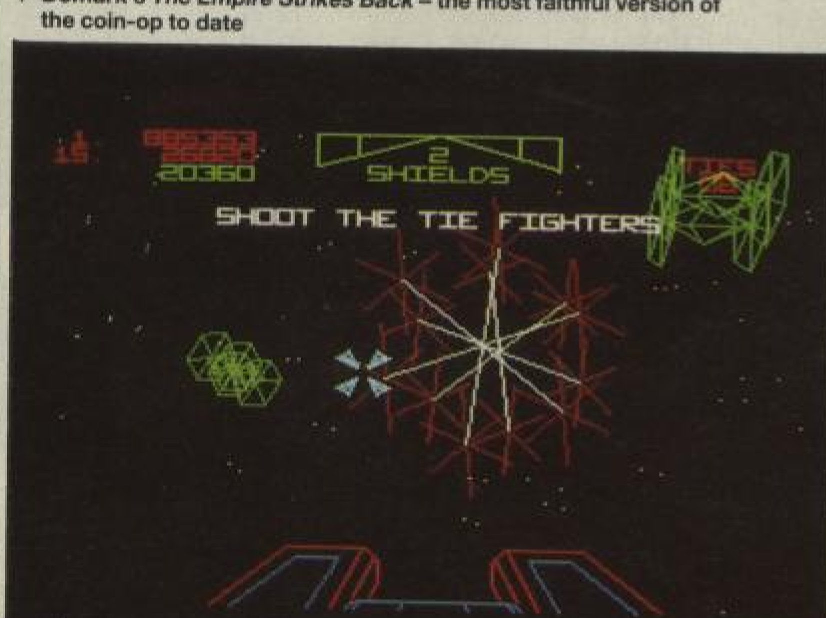


▲ 'Use the force, Luke, use the force' – and boy, do you need it!



Domark did a pretty good job with the Amiga conversion of Star Wars and they've done it again with The Empire Strikes Back. The careful presentation manages to recapture a lot of the frenetic atmosphere of the arcades, and as you've got the option of using the mouse (which I'd definitely recommend), you don't have to worry about controls and can just get on with doing what comes naturally – ie, shooting mindlessly at everything in sight – great! It's a pity that following the unexceptional quality of the sound in Star Wars, Domark haven't thought to improve it a bit the second time around. OK, so it's true to the original but the arcade version was released some time ago. A more up-to-date soundtrack and the Amiga conversion really would have been something to shout about.

▼ Domark's *The Empire Strikes Back* – the most faithful version of the coin-op to date



PRESENTATION 81%
In-game instructions, difficulty levels and bonus sequences – if you had to put 10p in the Amiga, you'd almost be playing the coin-op.

GRAPHICS 53%
Faithful to the slightly outdated original though just a touch too slow when the screen gets crowded.

SOUND 51%
Tinny *Star Wars* title tune plus sampled speech and one or two unexceptional effects.

HOOKABILITY 84%
You've just got to see whether you can complete all four stages in one go . . .

LASTABILITY 79%
. . . and whether you can do it again, with more points or fancier flying.

OVERALL 82%
An excellent conversion – atmospheric, addictive and faithful to the coin-op.

ATRON 5000



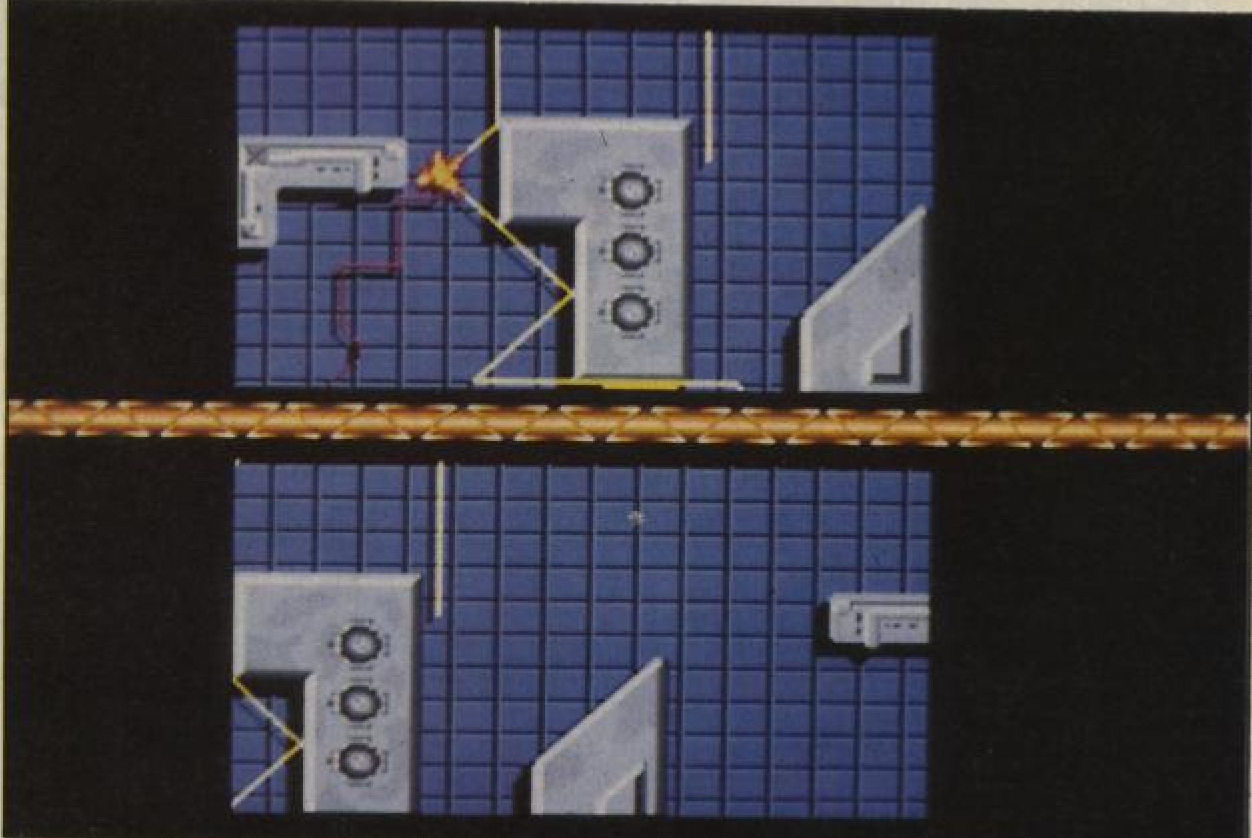
If you're looking for fancy graphics and sound, don't buy Atron 5000; if you're looking for one of the simplest and most addictive games on the Amiga, look no further. There's something about the way it's brought out the malicious instincts of everyone in the office this month – it's almost worrying to think your so-called friends could gloat so much when you slam into a brick wall! It's so hard to put down – you're always coming back for 'just one more go' so that you can wipe the floor with a grinning Geordie, an out-of-her-tree Austro-Egyptian or a rad-lad from Flint. Quite simply, it's brilliantly addictive from the first time you pick up the joystick; but beware – it's the ideal way to lose friends!

Players, £14.95 disk

Our Amiga's had all its going to take from you and has decided to turn the tables. Using the home-made laser digitisation equipment that you recently interfaced it with, the computer 'somehow' sucks you into its binary by-ways and plonks you behind the handlebars of a light-wheel for a game of *Atron 5000*. What a good plot. It makes you wonder why no-one's made a film like this (*IRONY WARNING*).

Atron is a battle to the death between you and another rider, fought in a series of scrolling arenas, littered with obstacles. Each light-wheel moves around the arena at a fixed speed, leaving a wake of pure energy (deadly to the touch) with which he has to fence in his opponent. Both riders' positions are shown on separate scrolling displays allowing each to keep an eye on whatever traps the other might be laying.

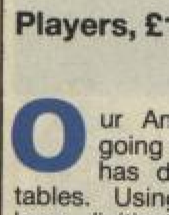
Clever riders can make use of icons which appear in the arena.



► **Aargh! Collision! Banana!**

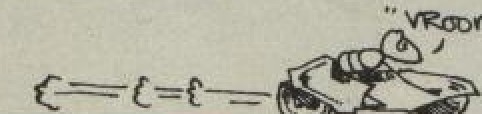
Each icon is one of two colours, corresponding to the colour of a light-wheel. A red bomb, for example, erases the trail of the red rider, while a yellow bomb does the same for the yellow rider. An 'S' puts one light-wheel into turbo mode, consequently making it a lot harder to control, but also allowing skilful riders to enclose their opponents quickly. The 'M' arms its collector with a missile which can be used to blow an escape route through an obstacle. When a 'W' icon is activated, a wall is instantaneously built right in the path of your opponent, inspiring big laughs all round. (ie, HA HA).

The fire button activates a weapon. The fact that you can collect icons of your opponent's colour means you can make life fun for him by giving his light-wheel turbo speed just as he's approaching a wall. What a *nice* game.



As far as I'm concerned, this knocks pixels off any of the other Tron **games we've looked at this month. Its 12 different arenas give it the variety the others lack and the pickups lend the game an air of malicious fun. Nothing beats watching your opponent go up in flames after you've dumped a wall right in front of him. Nothing, that is, except watching him head towards the side of the arena then speeding him up at the last nano-second so he can't turn in time! The graphics are even more sophisticated than they need to be, with bas-relief pipes and domes cutting down the space to manoeuvre, but sound isn't used particularly well. All you really get are a couple of digitised *VROOM*s at the start – it would have been nice to maybe have a sample of the *NYEEEEE* sound from the film. Still, Atron's loads of fun, and at the price, well worth a purchase.**





Wow! – two games based on one of my favourite films in one Issue! It's enough to turn you pink with pleasure – when it's not making you so mad that you're going a nasty shade of bright beetroot puce, that is. If you want to make new friends, don't invite them back to your house for a nice cosy game of Atron 5000 – it's designed to bring out the worst in everyone. You just can't resist letting out a gloating snort when somebody else careers head-first into a brick wall (and nobody laugh at me, or else . . .) You wouldn't go out of your way to call the graphics outstanding though the clashing, bashing sound effects are pretty atmospheric – it's another one of those situations where gameplay is all that counts. One reservation – the one-player option is slightly easy. But who cares when there's a whole stack of friends you can really annoy?

PRESENTATION 86%
Single and two player options, along with three speed settings. Effective split screen display and high score table saves to disk.

GRAPHICS 79%
Not brilliant, but differing arenas provide more variety than most games of this type.

SOUND 65%
Good sampled effects and reasonable whooshing and cornering sounds.

HOOKABILITY 90%
Play is fast and the many cunning methods available for wiping out your opponent can make the action very satisfying.

LASTABILITY 82%
Each game takes you through all 12 arenas, so there aren't any graphical secrets to uncover, but the urge to bump up your score is hook enough, and the two-player option will keep you going for months!

OVERALL 87%
An exceptional variation on the old *Tron* theme, especially addictive in two player mode.

Soldier of Fortune



Photograph by courtesy of Aquascutum.





Commodore 64 screen shots

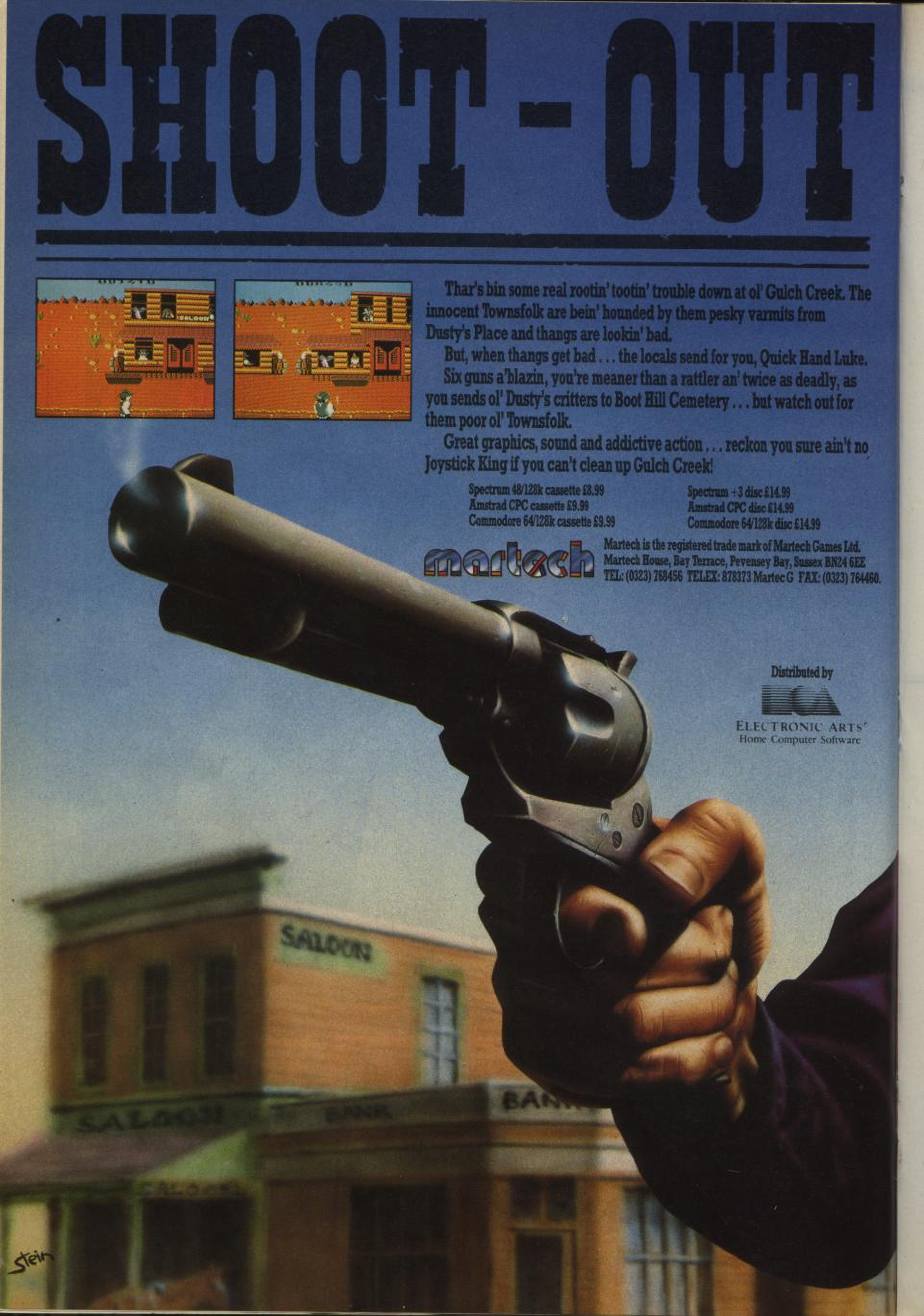
Spectrum cassette.......... £7.95
Spectrum +3 £12.95
Commodore 64 cassette.......... £9.95
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FIREBIRD

A LEGEND IN GAMES SOFTWARE


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Thar's bin some real rootin' tootin' trouble down at ol' Gulch Creek. The innocent Townsfolk are bein' hounded by them pesky varmits from Dusty's Place and thangs are lookin' bad.
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POWERPLAY

Arcana, £19.99

Instead of the harmonious strains of pipe music and ambrosial melodies, Mount Olympus is echoing with loud voices, the clash of armour and unmentionable four-letter words. There's one four-letter word we can mention though and that's ZEUS (you know – the one with the beard and the thunderbolt). Bored with all this quarrelling he's devised a contest to shut them up once and for all.

The new enhanced version of *Powerplay* (the original Amiga game was released last year) features 21 hand-drawn portraits of all the characters in addition to improved graphics and more finely animated challenge screens. Play itself remains pretty much the same: up to four players choose a difficulty level and pick a team of warriors from a suitably godlike selection.

Gods take it in turns to decide on a piece and answer a trivia question. Get it right and you're allowed to move the appropriate character one square in any direction on the multi-coloured board (different colours represent different trivia subjects). As questions are answered correctly, each character accumulates wisdom points; a score of 25 or more gives you the option to mutate to a higher grade of character (and there are some pre-tt-y UGLY ones on later levels).

If you concentrate for too long on a particular piece, other members of your team begin to get the hump. Occasionally they'll start moving about and stretching their legs of their own accord. Try to move on to a square occupied by an opponent piece and you're in for a fight . . . well, a challenge really. As if by magic you're transported to the site of a blazing lava pit or a gorgon's lair. The players compete against each other to answer the same questions. The more questions you get wrong, the closer you get to falling in the lava pit or being turned to stone by the gorgon's fatal stare.

Lose a challenge and you're demoted a character grade. There's no grade lower than one so if a grade one piece loses a head-to-head it vapourises and disappears from the board.



▲ This is one stony glare you won't forget



As I've been hooked on trivia games ever since I watched my first episode of Sale Of The Century, **I could hardly control my excitement when I heard about Arcana's latest release. (it hasn't got Nicholas Parsons, for a start). On all formats,** Powerplay **is still the best fix of computerised trivia around – it manages to involve all the players all of the time and doesn't give hours of playing time to the smarmy smart alecs who've tried to memorise the questions beforehand (like Paul). Having said that, the new enhanced Amiga version isn't all that different from the original. The character portraits do add a bit of interest but one of the challenge screens has been sacrificed for the extra animation – and a few more sound effects would have added to the atmosphere. This is probably the smarter version of the two but don't bother buying it if you've got the original.**

There's just one snag. If you make all your opponents disappear there's going to be nobody left to praise the smartypants. Serves you right, clever clogs!



At least the 64 version of Powerplay **had a sense of humour – you'd have to go far to find much sillier challenge music – which is basically what made it fun to play. Apart from the graphics, which do look pretty good, all the other Amiga improvements leave me cold. The way the characters keep going off and walking about on their own, creating a challenge when you most definitely don't want one (ie. have zilch strength) gets pretty annoying – probably why they called it irritability factor. There isn't any sound to speak of and the slowness of the action gave rise to one or two hefty snores. Unless you're a trivia addict, think before you grab this off the shelves.**



This was one of my all-time faves on the good ol' 64, because it wasn't just a literal translation of a question and answer game – it was also fun! I particularly liked the jolly challenge music, something which this version lacks (and suffers as a result) – in fact, it's on the whole less cute 'n' cuddly. However, this more formal 'epic' approach works extremely well, not least because of the superb pics of the challenging armies. The random element adds a touch of fate which can sometimes be annoying – but then, what would the game of the gods be without Fate? The clever question and answer system and the levels of difficulty mean that even if you think you know the answer, you're pushed to find it in the time allowed. On the whole, it's the kind of game *I* go crazy over (being an aspiring smart-arse), and if you're into trivia too, check it out.

▼ Go on – you can beat a dog, can't you? Well, in *Powerplay*, even the dogs have brains, so you'd better watch out



PRESENTATION 88%
Up to four players can choose a godlike array of warriors to fight over a range of difficulty levels. Practice option and a digitised end-game message from Zeus.

GRAPHICS 84%
Celestial detail and clever animation make for some heavenly moments. (Groooaaan – Ed.)

SOUND 55%
A few sampled effects – nothing to write home about.

HOOKABILITY 86%
Designed to make you want to beat your know-all opponents to a pulp.

LASTABILITY 79%
A huge question file ensures hours of fun – if you can still persuade your friends (?) to play, that is.

OVERALL 82%
Fit for the gods – but not if you've got the other Amiga version . . .

FIRE and Forget



▲ Which Theatre of War would you like to bring carnage to?

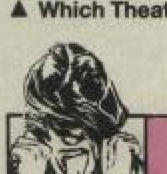
Titus, £24.95 disk

The world stands on the brink of holocaust: the Intergalactic Liberation Organisation is threatening to destroy the Earth. A powerful force is needed to restore freedom to the world and – wouldn't you know it? – that force turns out to be you.

Equipped with the Thunder Master – a four wheel drive armoured vehicle with a roof-



This has to be one of the fastest games I've ever seen – in fact I'm sure your only hope of success is to slip into a parallel universe in which time runs slightly slower. Now I've said that you're probably thinking that driving and blasting at breakneck speeds is pretty exhilarating stuff, but I'm afraid it isn't. Speed has been gained by compromising on animation and hence realism, so tanks, tank traps and helicopters appear on the screen only to disappear again almost immediately. Driving towards such a high-speed onslaught of obstacles is more a test of luck than skill and you just don't feel in control of the action. Consequently, for all its pretty graphics and raucous sound effects, Fire and Forget **just isn't very compelling. Certainly not compelling enough to merit such a whopping price tag.**



I played the ST incarnation of Crazy Cars, **this game's predecessor, and found its 3D depiction of events quite effective but play itself was unexciting.** Fire And Forget **on the Amiga retains the latter quality but is desperately short of convincing 3D as well. In an attempt to generate a frenetic feel to the action, Titus made an obvious choice in having the car tear along at a rapid pace while obstacles and, more importantly, enemy vehicles, approach at a frightening rate. To do this, they've taken the easy way out, by removing numerous animation frames! The objects are speedy but increase in size drastically between frames – in some situations a helicopter appears in the distance and flies over your car in two frames! The** Road Blasters **element does not work; you just pound away on the fire button hoping you'll destroy everything in your path. The two player game adds a little interest, but not enough to make** Fire and Forget **memorable. What was this comment about again?**

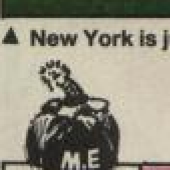
BOMB JACK


▲ New York is just piled high with explosive devices to dispose of

Elite, £24.99 disk

This is a game featuring a superhero. Ha! You expected me to tell the underpants joke didn't you? Well I'm *not* going to tell the underpants joke so there, NYAH! The superhero in question is *Bomb Jack*, star of arcade screens throughout the land as he, risking life and limb to save the planet from . . . (blah, blah, blah).

Now, some nasty character from somewhere ville in somewhere else land (okay, I don't know where exactly, but it's got to be somewhere so let's leave it at that) has taken a severe dislike to many of the world's most popular tourist spots – namely the Great Pyramids, the Parthenon, Disneyland, Miami Beach and Hollywood



Bomb Jack **was one of my most favourite arcade games a few years ago and I was incredibly disappointed by the 64 conversion. When I heard about an Amiga conversion, I thought that at last I would see a decent home version of the game, but, lo and behold, it's not much better than its predecessor! The arena seems bigger, which improves the gameplay a bit (a very little bit), but the robots act so stupidly that it's far too easy to complete the first set of levels. The opening music gives you a general idea of what to expect, in fact I'd go so far as to say it's the worst I've heard on the Amiga. The graphics aren't much better either: the backdrops are OK, but the effect is ruined by the emaciated sprites and piddly platforms.** Bomb Jack **is a seriously sub-standard conversion and I expect much** much **more from the Amiga.**



Well, er . . . This isn't really what honest (?) games reviewers like us are looking for at £24.99, is it? I mean, the 64 version wasn't up to much and, despite arcade-accurate graphics (aaah, *I* remember the arcade), this isn't either. For a start, it's too easy – a lot easier than its coin-op counterpart – and to make things worse, it's far too expensive. Then the sound is pretty terrible – I'd rather be kept awake all night listening to the Bee Gees – and the presentation is virtually nonexistent; get the impression that there's not much to recommend it? In fact, wouldn't this kind of basic platform game – licence or not – be better around £10-15? I'd only urge ardent fans of the original to try it. On second thoughts, no I wouldn't.

mounted missile launcher and an optional air assault craft called the Thunder Cloud (hard, or what?) – you must drive through six key areas to destroy the ILO craft. Enemy tanks and helicopters can be vapourised with your gun, for bonus points; in two-player mode a friend can control the Thunder Cloud. The aircraft's fuel supply is maintained by boarding the Thunder Master from above.

PRESENTATION 79%
Neat hi-res introduction pictures and novel two-player option

GRAPHICS 67%
Some attractive detail let down by poor 3D animation.

SOUND 65%
Unusual (irrelevant) samples and passable music.

HOOKABILITY 53%
The very fast action is more of an annoyance than a source of excitement.

LASTABILITY 38%
Three skill levels do nothing to help your world-saving quest.

OVERALL 47%
A poorly programmed *Road Blasters* variation. Easily forgotten (predictable comments inc).

– and has planted a number of bombs designed to blow them to bits. In case anyone decides to try and thwart his plans, he leaves an army of robot warriors at each scene to guard the bombs. You take the part of the daring superhero in his race to defuse the bombs before they detonate, by leaping across platforms picking up the explosives as you go.

So off to save the world you trot. In fact you're in such a hurry, you manage to put your underpants on over your tights. (Oh no! I said it! Aaaaargh!)

PRESENTATION 52%
A few standard options and the title screen looks as though it's only there because it has to be.

GRAPHICS 59%
Decent backgrounds but there's naff all good about the sprites.

SOUND 23%
Well, it's in tune . . .

HOOKABILITY 30%
As soon as you hear the title music you know it's going to be rubbish . . .

LASTABILITY 25%
. . . and it doesn't get any better.

OVERALL 39%
Yet another poor arcade conversion of *Bomb Jack* – the game must be doomed!

VIXEN

Martech, £19.99 disk

On those days when the bus is late, there's a bumper edition of *Gardener's Question Time* and you can't find your deodorant, cheer up – life on other planets is EVEN WORSE. Granath, for instance – a planet full of whopping great prehistoric monsters constantly on the lookout for a tasty bit of lunch.

The only human being still left alive is Vixen, who was raised by foxes and is mistress of a pretty nasty whip. Her struggle to survive this hostile environment is depicted in the form of a series of timed horizontally scrolling levels.

Sensibly equipped with bikini and leather lash, she jogs along, leaping chasms, climbing steps and whipping crowds of prehistoric blobs into the ground. Hitting headstones reveals bonus objects and fox time icons. Collect enough of the latter and you're granted access to an underground bonus level.

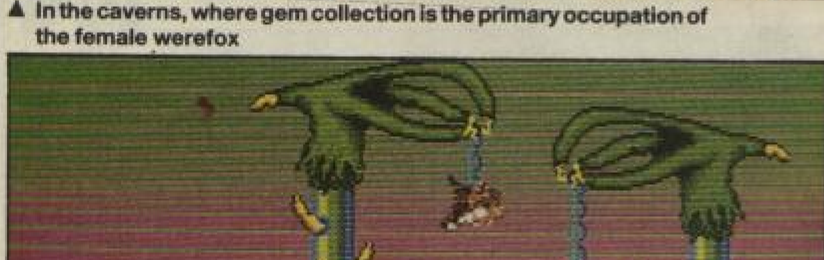
At this point the foxy lady stops being a lady and turns into a fox. Underground goodies include mega gems and mega whips. Collect them all and you're back on the surface resuming the whip-lashing battle to survive. Epic, huh?



The Vixen **publicity campaign has really fallen flat, splat on its face. If the box weren't covered with pictures of Corinne Russell, it probably wouldn't be so noticeable that the Vixen sprite doesn't look like her at all. With no face, a gait like a limp chicken and a limbo-dancing death throe, she doesn't look as if she could survive a tiny tots' disco – let alone Granath. The appalling graphics wouldn't matter so much if the gameplay made up for it – but it doesn't. Hour upon hour of crouching and whipping is about as fun as eating ten raw elephants with false teeth. Bleuch! The controls are awkward and so is the scrolling. If you feel like splashing out, splash out on something else.**



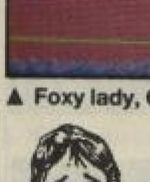
▲ **In the caverns, where gem collection is the primary occupation of the female werefox**



▲ **Foxy lady, Corinne Russell lets fly with her trusty whip**



Vixen, in my opinion, got off to a bad start with the public, relying on the software buyers' perviness and a stream of controversial publicity to promote sales. All the hype seemed to me to be built up around a load of pretensions, and we find, as expected, that the game doesn't live up to these pretensions. The jungle-music soundtrack soon becomes tedious, and the graphics look as dated as an episode of Lost In Space, **except** Vixen **is in colour, worse luck. I say 'worse luck' because the colours are hideous. I mean, green and orange monsters, yeeeuurg! Howevermuch Martech charged for this it would be too much. Actually, you'd have to pay me to have this!** Vixen **is dreadful.** Really **dreadful. Got the message?**



I didn't think much of the 64 version when it came in, and, deary-oh-me, the Amiga version is no better. Gameplay is still the same pointless move-right-crouch-whip stuff that had me slumped over the 64 keyboard, which is no more than you would expect, I suppose. 'But the graphics and sound – surely they're improved, Paul?' Well, not really. Miss Foxy Amazon lopes along like a reluctant jogger to the beat of some insipid jungle disco sounds, and Granath's itinerant fauna still consists of poorly-animated mutant . . . things . . . which don't resemble anything that could evolve by Darwin's processes of Natural Selection. Sound effects don't exactly recreate the mystery and excitement of the jungle, and even Vixen's deadly whip makes a noise like someone clicking their fingers. Suffice it to say that the game lives up beautifully to the very tacky packaging, and is deserving of no-one's money.

PRESENTATION 45%
Unless you count the Corinne Russell poster – nothing special.

GRAPHICS 35%
Featureless main sprite surrounded by prehistoric alien blobs.

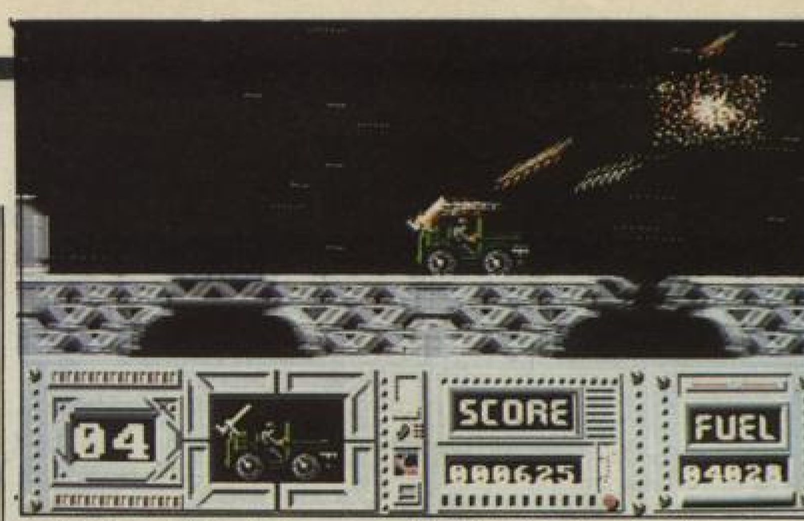
SOUND 47%
Average in-game tune plus Tarzan drumbeat.

HOOKABILITY 26%
Curiosity keeps you playing until you get to the bonus section . . .

LASTABILITY 15%
. . . but not much longer.

OVERALL 25%
A totally unoriginal collect 'em up with nothing at all to get in a lather about.

16-BIT



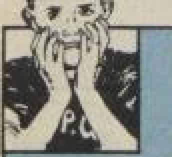
▲ If you're insane or a little bit quirky, Pay 25 quid for Ocean's turkey

ARMY MOVES

Imagine, £24.95 disk

Your careers officer in school really had a hard time finding you a job. Just saying 'I wanna be an 'ard man!' wasn't exactly helpful. Still, now you're in the Special Operations Corps (SOC), you've been sent on a well dangerous mission to steal information from the enemy.

You must fight your way over a bridge in your jeep, through air defences in your helicopter and finally, on foot into the headquarters themselves, proclaiming yourself a hero! OK, OK and a 'well 'ard geezer' if that's what you want . . .



Good grief! Come on Imagine, I thought the Amiga games market had passed through the 'Never Mind The Game, Look At The Graphics' phase! The level of gameplay in Army Moves **is so minimal that it annoys me to think that people may have paid out big bucks just so that they can practise holding down the fire button and religiously going through two joystick movement patterns. The slightest deviation from the stringent stick manoeuvering results in instant death, and a return trip to the start of the level! So if, after ten minutes' play, you haven't vengefully put the disk under the grill and watched it bubble its way into oblivion, you'll be slumped over your joystick dreaming of happier times. I regret the loss to the world's natural resources caused by the production of this utterly awful 'game'.**



I must admit I've never seen the arcade game, so I can't comment on whether this is an accurate conversion or not, but if it is faithful to the coin-op original, then I can safely say that it wouldn't get any of my **ten pees pushed into it!** Army Moves **just doesn't utilise any of the Amiga's power to create fantastic graphics and realistic sound. They'd be passable on the humble 64, but on the Amiga they're nothing short of pathetic. The action is fiercely difficult and the only way to get through level one is by repeatedly shooting, jumping and backing off – not the most engrossing gameplay ever. If you like your Amiga, then don't make it suffer by loading this into it.**

PRESENTATION 28%
A high score table . . . and that's it.

GRAPHICS 21%
Bland sprites and sparse backdrops utilise little of the Amiga's potential.

SOUND 12%
Constant unmelodic title track and pathetic effects.

HOOKABILITY 33%
Frustratingly hard from the word go . . .

LASTABILITY 29%
. . . and *very* boring.

OVERALL 24%
Almost non-existent gameplay makes this very poor value for money.

EXTENSOR



Players, £9.95 disk

If you had a fresh planet to colonise, probably the last name you'd think of (barring a few other unacceptable options) would be Spazm. Pity the Spazmoids didn't think like that . . .

Having saddled themselves with such a depressing name, the Spazmoids need something to cheer them up – so (wait for it) . . . they flock to the lazercycle arena. Obvious really. In glorious 3D, you try to get your computer-controlled opponents to crash into the energy trails emitted by their vehicles or the arena walls.

If you win, you're a hero, if not, you're dead. Isn't sport great?

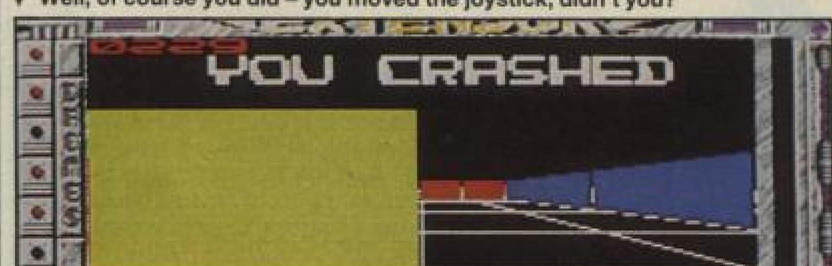


If there's someone you don't like very much lurking at the bottom of the list of your best mates, here's just the game you should spend ages persuading them to buy. Just think – they'll never get that tenner back. It's not the minimalist stick-insect graphics or the annoyingly grating tune so much as the appalling gameplay. For a start, the long-range scanner doesn't show any of the other lazercycles so you can't see who you're not meant to be bumping into. Fun, huh? Turn a corner into a gaping, wide, enormous gap and you end up crashing head first into an invisible wall (even funnier). Unless head-butting is your favourite sport, use your brain and give this one a miss.



Yeuch! Give me Atron 5000 **any day, since this is a hopeless 3D interpretation of one of the more addictive game genres. OK, so the sound is annoying and the game over tune grates; and OK, so the graphics are basic to a fault – but the gameplay's all right, isn't it? Well, erm . . . no. The gameplay is basically crap. I can guarantee that within ten seconds of starting the game in the maze, you'll be dead. If you're unwise, you'll pick up the joystick to have another go. Try a third time, and you should be certified. It's frustrating, tedious and irksome, and should have been kicked in the teeth long ago.**

▼ Well, of course you did – you moved the joystick, didn't you?



PRESENTATION 50%
A whole range of arena patterns and other menus including three difficulty levels – not that this helps.

GRAPHICS 29%
Basic wire-frame 3D which gets filled in occasionally.

SOUND 31%
Repetitive tune plus really irritating game-over sequence.

HOOKABILITY 7%
Less hook than Frank Bruno with his arms in plaster . . .

LASTABILITY 5%
. . . and even less long-term value.

OVERALL 9%
A pathetic parody of a *Tron*-style game, with crippling controls and as much excitement as a day with Paul Glancey.

BEYOND THE ICE PALACE

Elite, £24.99 disk

Ever since you were a boy you've heard stories of the distressed land beyond the Ice Palace of the dark lord. You always regarded these tales as mere fantasy, but the simple truth of the matter is that the tales of the atrocities have merely been distorted from the truth over years of telling.

The thing is, the battle is still being fought . . .

One legend which has stayed the same for as long as you can remember is the tale of the blessed arrow. The forces of good were gradually being overwhelmed by the forces of evil and so needed the help of the wood spirits. Since there was no way for a messenger to escape to summon help, they were relying on someone to find the arrow and bring the spirits to them.

Guess what? One day, whilst you were walking in the woods, you saw something shimmering in the undergrowth. It was an arrow.

Driven by the forces of the woods, you find yourself walking as if in a dream, towards the land beyond the Ice Palace. The world you eventually see is a desolate wasteland, the trees dead and decaying, the buildings shattered ruins. You don't really get time to take in the desolation of your surroundings, as a flight of demons swoop in towards you.

You hurl your weapon at them in a last-ditch attempt to save yourself, only to find that another weapon is in your hand as if by magic, ready to fight again. And so, with an endless supply of weapons and the help of the wood spirits when you are really in trouble, you wend your way further into adventure, along platforms and up precarious ladders, to do battle with the evil warriors and the dark lord at the heart of the land beyond the Ice Palace. OK, OK, we won't use that phrase again.



▲ **The surroundings may be chilly but the action is pretty hot *Beyond the Ice Palace***



I like a bit of a challenge, but Beyond the Ice Palace **takes things a bit far! It looks and sounds very nice, but play is made discouragingly difficult by the !£&#ing monsters which lurk out of reach of your weapons (and sometimes out of sight) then pounce or fire at you when there's no room to take evasive action. There is some compulsion to get to the end of the first level, but the rest of the game just seems to be a maze of platforms and ladders – dullsville, dad! It's a pity Elite haven't used their resources on converting the original** Ghosts 'n' Goblins **instead of producing what appears to be an imitation. I know that I'd be much more keen to spend £25 on that.**



Grrr! Anybody wanna fight? I've just been playing Beyond the Ice Palace **and it's really put me in the mood for a good punch up! The maddening frustration induced by this game took its toll on the joystick I was using, which popped a few microswitches when I started mashing it into the desk! Sometimes it's just impossible to avoid the monsters or shoot them, so you end up dead through no fault of your own. Infuriating, huh? Well, as if that wasn't bad enough, the game casts some kind of spell of compulsion over you, so you have to keep going through this agony again and again. The graphics and sound are above average in quality but they could have been better, and once you're proficient at the game, I think you'd want more than three levels for your £25. And I'll kill anyone who says different!**

▼ **He who laughs last is probably about to kill you**





Beyond The Ice Palace **is the latest in a line of** Ghosts 'n' Goblins **variants and yet again the new game isn't as good as the original. The graphics are good at times, the diseased trees and main character animation are particularly impressive, but occasionally the effect is let down by poorer sections such as the bland and repetitive building graphics. The sound is none too astounding either, consisting of a drab soundtrack and average spot effects. As for playability – well, there isn't really a lot to it, and what's there is difficult. I suppose that's because there are only three levels, so they don't want you to finish too quickly, now do they? Well I was finished playing after a short while because I got a bit fed up of the same old thing all the time. Have a look if you're a fan of the genre, but I can't see a lot of others being that enthused.**

PRESENTATION 61%
Plot-divulging opening scroll and a few options, comprising key definition and music on/off.

GRAPHICS 72%
Vary in quality, but the sprites and backdrops are generally well-defined and animated.

SOUND 66%
Average music and inoffensive effects, but not much to create a spooky atmosphere.

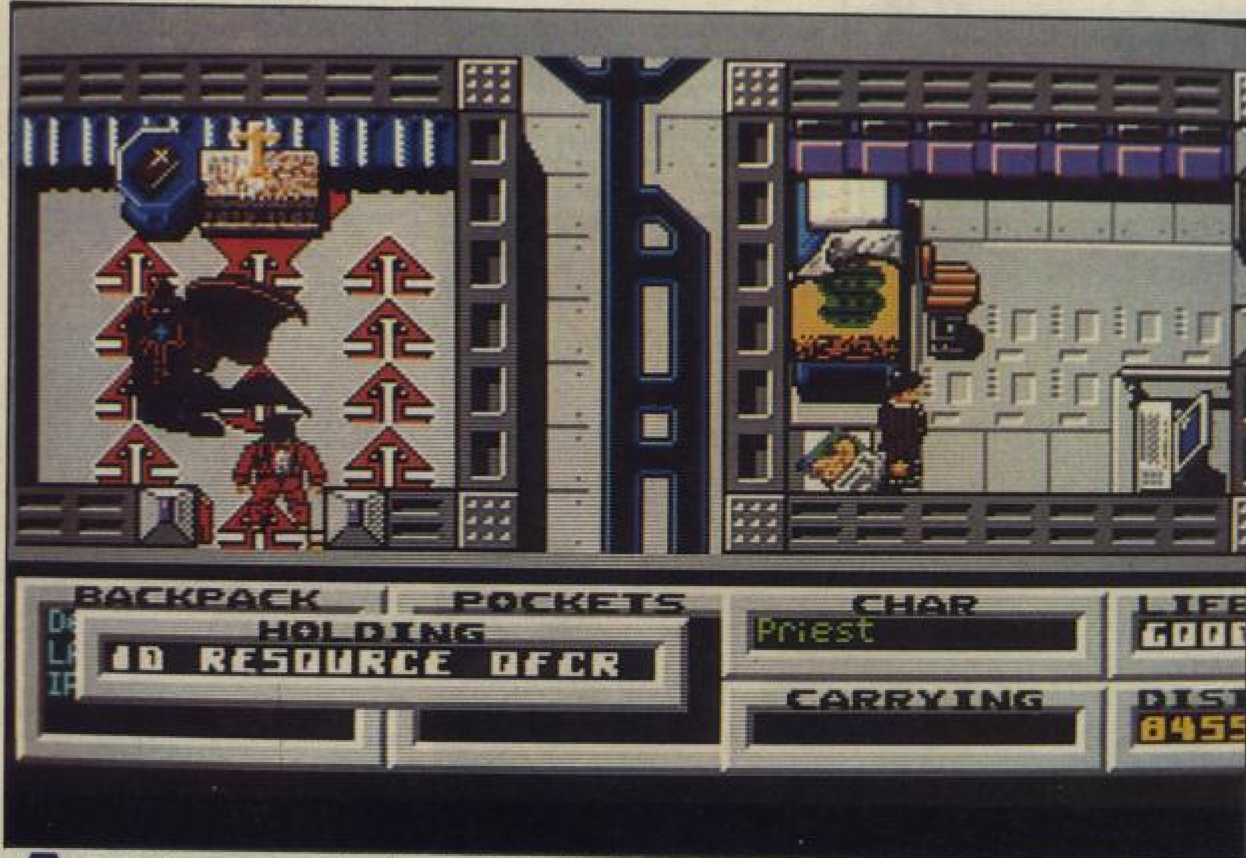
HOOKABILITY 63%
A little too difficult to get into due to the evasive enemies.

LASTABILITY 69%
Just a tad repetitive.

OVERALL 70%
A slightly above average *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* game.

Pandora

Firebird, £19.99 disk



▲ In the Pandora's chapel, and the resident clergyman looks like he eats Atheists for breakfast

As the human race edged closer and closer to a nuclear suicide in the latter years of the twentieth century, the Maincore Computer Development research team joined forces with other European scientists to set up the *Pandora* project. Its purpose was to find new forms of life more intelligent than man and to apply their knowledge to attempt to patch up the problems of the human race. Due to the expected length of the mission, the project called for a completely self-contained environment capable of maintaining life for a limitless period of time. For this reason, the research and design team developed the Pandora system, a seventh generation computer, to control the environment on the ship – also named Pandora – as well as the security systems.

The computer was fitted with an experimental component, Bio-Rhythmic Stabilisers, which could not be tested fully due to the alien conditions required to put the computer through its paces. It was suspected that if the Stabilisers were to malfunction, then the computer may express violent and aggressive tendencies. This was considered such a remote possibility that Pandora was fitted as it stood.

For decades after its launch, the ship Pandora was treated much like a foreign island, with its own nationals running their own system, the computer rather like the lord of the land. Only now, 200 years later, is it considered to be worth more than the usual amount of attention, because instead of maintaining its course the ship is on its way back to Earth, and it's in a hurry.

You play the part of an intergalactic salvage operator, who must board the Pandora and discover as much as possible about the situation on the ship and return as many artifacts as possible, so that scientists can discover what alien conditions caused the system to go wrong.

Fully equipped with chapel, private chambers and squash court, the ship is bursting with clues. Corpses litter the corridors and exploration reveals plenty of pretty peculiar objects (what are you supposed to do with a Mobian brain – I ask you?).

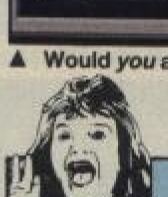
Those humans still alive will usually want something. Provide them with the appropriate thingy and they'll usually give you some incredibly valuable present in return. Get too close to someone (droids included) when you're not carrying the right object, though,



I didn't expect to like Pandora**, since the first phrase that usually springs to mind when I see this type of game is 'adventure-strategy game, ugh!'. But I must say I was pleasantly surprised to find it extremely playable and atmospheric. It does require some thought (something I'm not particularly equipped for), but the puzzles aren't as ambiguous as some 'serious' adventure games and the answers can be found quite easily. The graphics portray the various characters and positions nicely, with some brill details like the priest's cape and the headbutting hooligan (although the markings on the squash court don't seem quite right). Sound is used sparingly, but to good effect nonetheless – and the title music is of a very high standard. You don't usually see presentation and graphics of this standard in a strategy game, which makes** Pandora **stand out from the crowd.**



▲ Would *you* approach that shady looking character on the left?



Skinheads, maniac laughing thieves, mad musicians, solo squash players, priests in batman outfits, megalomaniac motor droids – you name it, Pandora**'s got it. Right from my very first go (in which I got completely flattened, by the way) I was hooked. You can spend ages just wandering around exploring all the different rooms observing all the other people – which is great 'cos most of them are ravin' mad. Once you've got into the puzzles you can forget about catching that latest episode of** That's My Dog **– you'll be playing, getting massacred and trading right through until old Rover's dinner time. It could have done with a bit more sound and some less awkward push-scrolling, but apart from that I couldn't find anything to complain about. Shame – I was looking forward to a good gripe . . .**

and, no questions asked, you're in the middle of a fight. Though you can control the power of your punches, unless you have a weapon, more often than not, you're likely to lose.

Survive all this and you just might make it back to the shuttle – I wouldn't bet on it, though.



▲ So what do you do now, arcade adventurer? (Cue diabolical laughter)



When this appeared on the 64 I found it less than enthralling, but the programmers have taken advantage of the Amiga's better graphics and enhanced the game with some very smart sprites and backdrops. The Pandora's residents, though not particularly well animated, are all easily discernible and each has its own character. The punk struts around, sticking the nut on walls and causing fights, while the priest just stands there, looking mysterious with his cloak flapping in some supernatural breeze. The sad thing is, the basic gameplay is still more or less the same. Meet one character, find out what they want, find the character who has what the last one wants, and on it goes. Let's face it, if you were playing an adventure whose puzzles just consisted of object bartering you wouldn't find it terribly compelling. Still, because there is so much else going on, Pandora **manages to get away with it and emerges as a game which provides a respectable level of entertainment, for a while at least.**

PRESENTATION 84%
Loads and loads of outstanding in-game features, but the scrolly messages are a tad too rapid.

GRAPHICS 86%
Impressively detailed with plenty of humorous touches.

SOUND 80%
Funky tune with sampled guitars.

HOOKABILITY 90%
Immediate playability ensures instant appeal . . .

LASTABILITY 85%
. . . and with so many puzzles it's bound to last.

OVERALL 87%
A boxfull of tricks, puzzles and entertainment, more absorbing than a Fiesta kitchen towel.

QUADRALIEN

Logotron, £19.95 disk

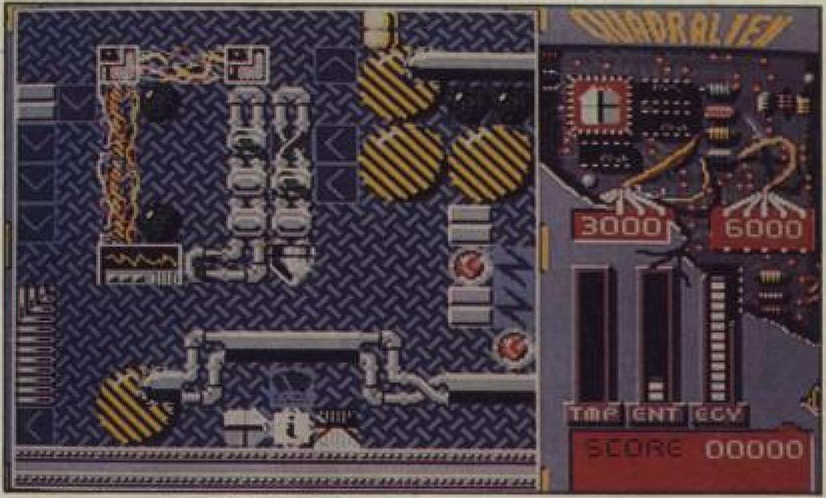
In the mid twenty-first century, the strange *Quadralien* forces begin to appear in increasingly high numbers. Until recently they have been rather annoying, but no more. Robbing ships and stealing supplies was all their activity added up to; but now they are acting much more menacingly, threatening to invade the colony worlds of our solar system. They have already killed humans without robbing the craft, an act which suggests that something is afoot . . .

You are a travelling technical engineer, specialising in dangerous situations involving nuclear power and other radioactive power sources, and are not to pleased to be dragged out of bed to rush to Jupiter's Astra station. When you hear the reason for your hasty summons, your agitation is replaced by increasing apprehension. It appears that for some reason DyMSEC (Dynamic Magnetics System of Entropy Control) has gone haywire, shutting off the central computer's external communications circuits and ignoring the rising reactor temperature. But that's not the only problem . . .

Astra's main purpose was to transmit energy along quantum-quantum beams to long distance stations and installations. However, it seems that the Quadraliens have found a way to travel along these beams and have infiltrated Astra station. So your task is twofold; search the ship, dropping collant barrels into reactor shoots and reducing the entropy to keep the core temperature down, and find and destroy the mother Quadralien – otherwise, their forces could extend throughout our solar system, leaving a trail of devastation wherever they go.

The central computer has locked out all the higher levels, so you must clear the lower levels to reveal an access code which will enable you to use the lift to the uppermost levels of the reactor station. However, due to the high levels of radiation in the plant after the malfunction, you can't personally enter the rooms. Even a strong radiation suit won't protect you. You must send in six remote drones to carry out the tasks required. These range from a standard 'tug' type drone to laser armed hunter drones.

You must succeed in securing the station. The aliens have already tapped into Jupiter station's power beam. Who knows where they could infiltrate ne *click, bzzzzzzz . . .*



▲ Well – is it obvious to *you* what's going on?



At first Quadralien **gives the impression of being an involved arcade/strategy game, but continual plays reveal a graphically and technically impressive program that pays no attention to playability. The objective is simple enough, but how to go about it remains a complete mystery, even after several long sessions trying to find a clue. The plot is extremely contrived and gives the impression that the programmers want you to think that they're *ever* so clever for inventing these difficult puzzles; but the whole thing just falls flatter than a steam-rollered duck. The additional help sheets are essential, which shouldn't be the case with any game, since you don't want to hang around for a few weeks waiting to play something you've just shelled out 20 quid for.** Quadralien **is only simple in one respect: it's simply too confusing. Maff's handy tip for the month: if you want to stay sane and calm, don't buy it.**



Urgh! I've just spent the last hour trying to decipher Quadralien **and I don't think I've really managed it yet. The concept of droids shutting down a space station is pretty reminiscent of** Paradroid **on the 64 but the instructions are about as helpful as a Swedish train time-table in Japanese. You can send off to Logotron for hints but that seems a bit extreme for what's basically an arcade game – even if it does have a strong puzzle element. In spite of the competent graphics and the obvious care that's gone into all the presentation, I can't really see something as obscure as this appealing to the average games player; however, if you've got plenty of time and energy coupled with a lunatic streak, you might want to give it a whirl.**

▼ Nice graphics, huh? Who needs them when they're tagged onto a game about as entertaining as a night out with PG and ME?



PRESENTATION 52%
Good in-game presentation, but rubbish instructions and clever-clever puzzles.

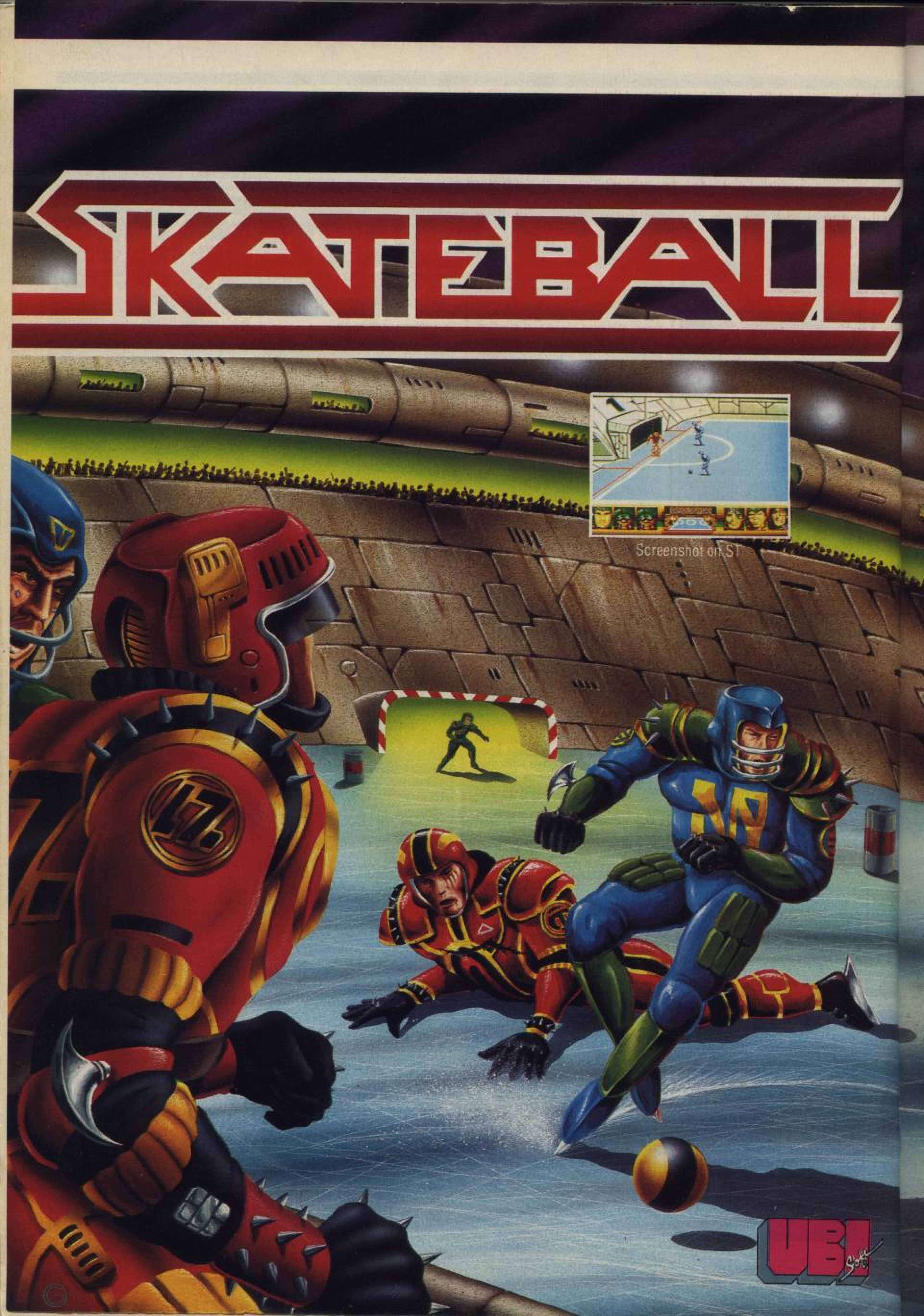
GRAPHICS 81%
Clear, colourful, sharp and technically very good.

SOUND 53%
Not a great deal of it, and what there is is hardly atmospheric.

HOOKABILITY 28%
Instantly difficult.

LASTABILITY 36%
You'll quickly get very bored of running around in circles.

OVERALL 37%
An example of how *not* to produce an arcade/strategy game.


SKATEBALL
Screenshot on ST
UBI Soft


Screenshot on ST
Screenshot on PC
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Why make friends With an Amiga?

If you managed to catch the last issue of ZZAP! you may have noticed that the team rather like the Amiga – but with the ST at just under £400, what makes the Amiga the one to buy this Christmas? Maff Evans has looked at both machines and provides a personal interpretation of what he sees as the many advantages of Commodore's 16-bit wonder.



My first dabbling in the 16-bit market was on the Atari ST about a year and a half ago, and I must admit to thinking to myself, 'Phwoar! These Atari machines are a bit good, eh?'; at that time I stood by the fact that the ST could hold its own against the Amiga *and* was cheaper to boot. Since then I've seen the power of the Amiga and my outlook on the situation has changed – drastically.

Well, let's compare the two machines and see why I think you should buy an Amiga . . .



PROCESSORS

Both machines use the same processor, a 16/32 bit Motorola 68000, although the ST's actual processor speed is greater than the Amiga's, running at 8MHz to the Amiga's 7.14 MHz. This fact is often used by fans of the ST to defend its case. The problem is that with the ST, all graphics, sound and other processing tasks run directly from the processor, whereas the Amiga has a plethora of custom chips (well, a few anyway), which allow it to carry out tasks more efficiently and, perhaps more importantly, faster than the ST. The custom chips themselves are really the key to why the Amiga appears to be a more impressive machine, controlling the graphics and sound independently.



GRAPHICS

The most obvious attribute of the 16-bit machines is their amazing graphical capabilities. The ST has three graphic modes: 640x400 in two colours which requires a monochrome monitor, 640x200 in four colours and 320x200 in 16 colours. Any of the colours may be selected from a palette of 512.

The Amiga boasts four modes: 640x400, two modes using 16 colours (either 320x400 or 640x200) and 320x200 using 32 colours. All colours are selected from an extensive palette of 4,096, eight times the number of colours on the ST. There is also a HAM (hold and modify) mode, allowing all 4,096 colours to be displayed on a static screen, a feature not implemented on the Atari. The Amiga also has eight hardware sprites, hardware scrolling and a bit Blitter – a chip which allows large amounts of screen (or other) data to be moved very quickly, allowing fast on-screen animation.

As you can see, the Amiga certainly wins out in the graphics field, with more colours and more powerful graphic utilities.



SOUND

Being a great music fan, spending most of my money on records, I consider sound and music to be very important in a computer. Due to the quick release of the ST, Atari plumped for a cheap and available sound chip – similar to the ones found in the Spectrum 128 and Amstrad CPC machines. The chip itself is rather limited, only offering the user three channels and a square-wave oscillator. For all you non-synth users, I'd better briefly explain, in my own way, about sound waves . . .

There are four basic wave shapes; square waves (used for string and other 'thin' sounds), sine waves (for a more 'pure' tone), sawtooth waves (gives a hard edged sound) and noise (gives a rasping or hissing tone). Combinations of these wave-shapes go together to make 'real' sounds, which is why a computer needs to make use of them to create realistic



effects. Since the ST can only produce square waves, this severely limits its capacity for music and effects, unless sampled sound is used – but this takes lots of memory and processor time.

The Amiga is much better catered for sound, with the custom 'Paula' sound chip (why do Commodore like giving their components peoples' names?). The chip features four stereo channels (thus giving eight altogether), nine octaves of pitch, complex waveforms and both AM and FM sound sources (as used in Yamaha's DX synths). Also, due to the complex sound structures within the chip, samples can be used with less processor power to give startling results (check out the sampled whale-song in *Starglider2* or the powerhouse loading tune of *Star Ray*).

Well, it seems that the Amiga comes out tops in the sound comparison as well! The poor ST is flagging a bit . . .

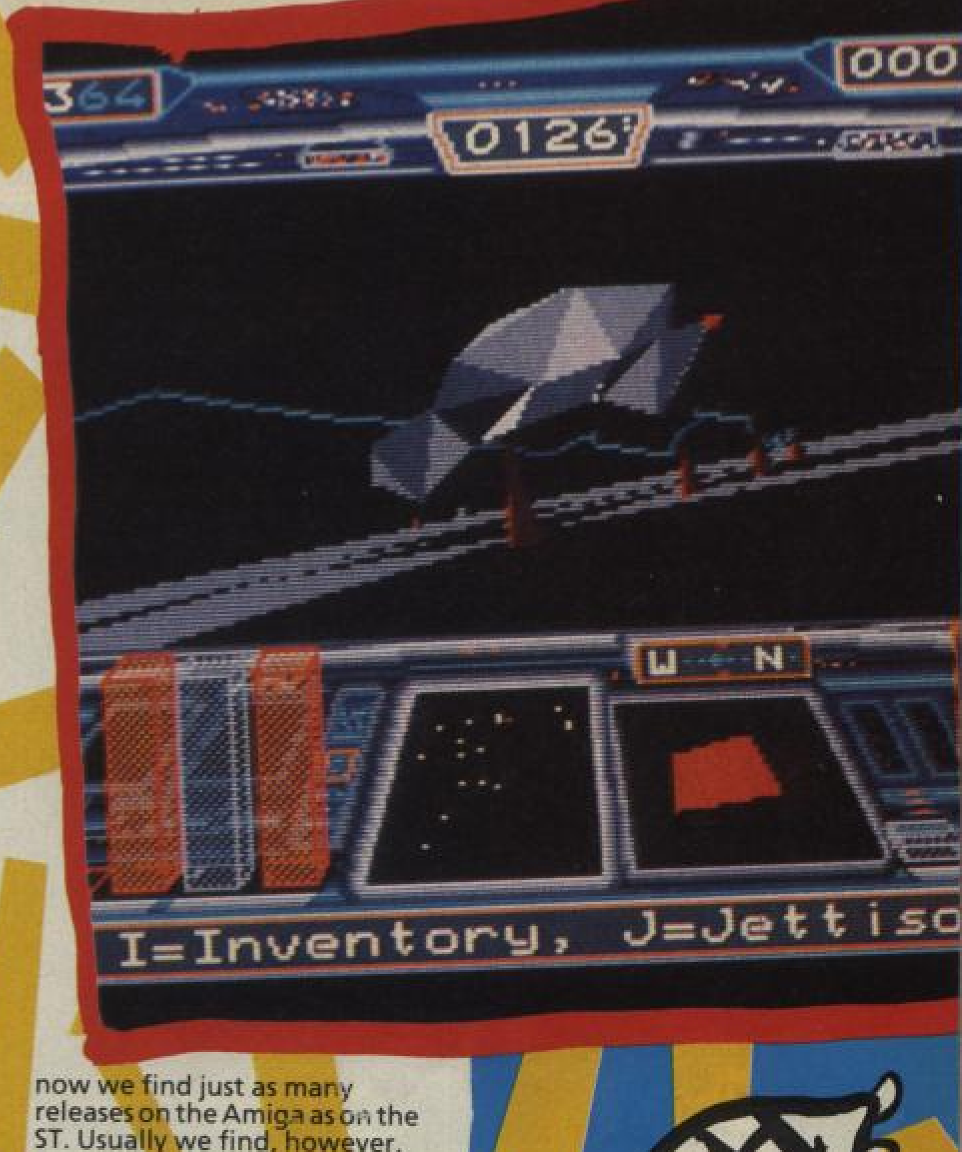
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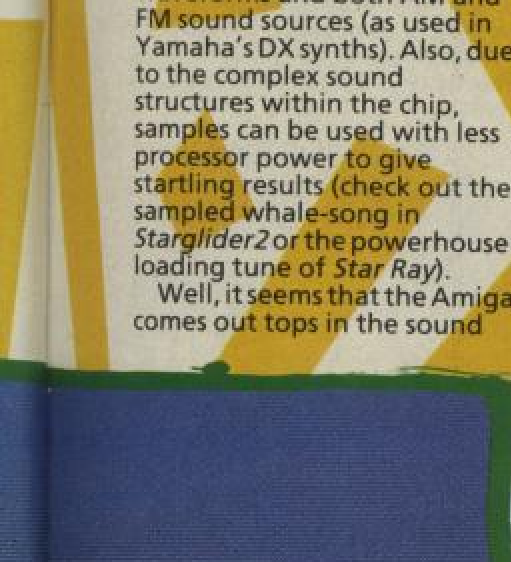
So what else have these machines got apart from sound and graphics? Can the ST redeem itself in another area?

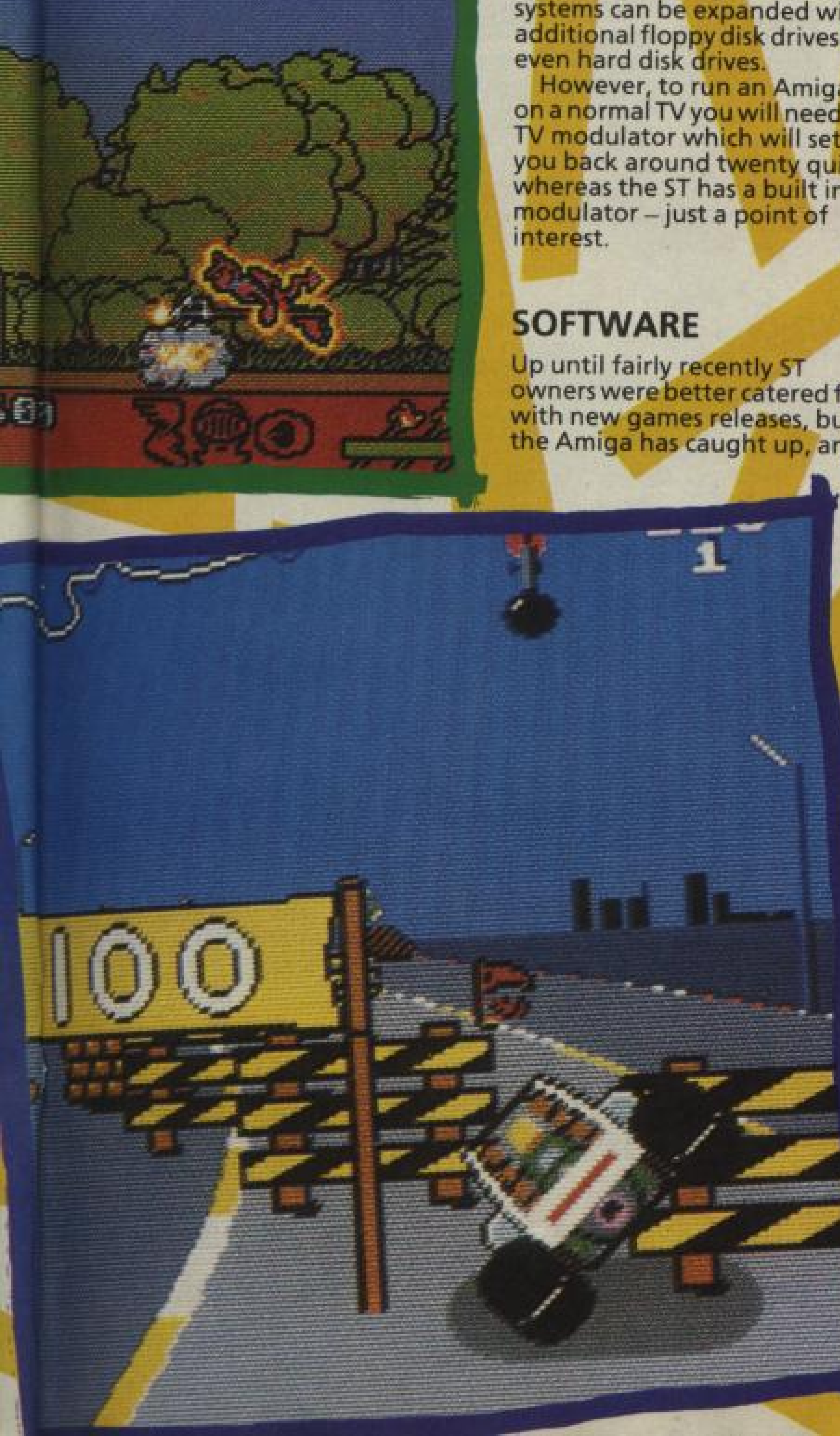
Well one thing that the ST has is a built in MIDI interface, which has made it very popular with musicians with an extensive electronic music set-up. The only problem is, after spending your money on the ST and buying your MIDI synth/drum machine/sampler or whatever, the sequencers for the ST usually cost over £200! Since there is a plug-in MIDI interface for the Amiga, and the software is much the same price as the ST's, only those with a view of serious session or studio work would find the ST a benefit, unless you've used a particular sequencer or editor and want to stick with what you know.

As far as disk storage goes, the built-in disk on the Amiga holds 880 kilobytes of data on double sided 3.5" disks, as does the Atari 1040ST. The 520ST only holds 360 kilobytes as standard, although all three systems can be expanded with additional floppy disk drives or even hard disk drives.

However, to run an Amiga on a normal TV you will need a TV modulator which will set you back around twenty quid, whereas the ST has a built in modulator – just a point of interest.







SOFTWARE

Up until fairly recently ST owners were better catered for with new games releases, but the Amiga has caught up, and now we find just as many releases on the Amiga as on the ST. Usually we find, however, that use of graphics and sound is more impressive on the Amiga than the Atari (but not in all cases).

Recently, we ran a side-by-side test of the Amiga and ST versions of *Starglider 2*, comparing speed and playability of both. It turned out that the ST version ran everso slightly faster, probably due to the way in which the graphics are drawn, needing quite a lot of processor power to calculate the 3D positions. However, the general consensus of opinion in the ZZAP! office was that the Amiga version was more atmospheric, due to the amazing sound and more subtle shading, and subsequently more playable.

For more software appraisals on the Amiga, you'll have to read ZZAP! won't you? (subscriptions still available) . . .



CONCLUSIONS

By now you should have worked out which machine comes out tops! Even with the 'Super ST' on the horizon, the Amiga is still *the* machine to buy, the already large user base ensuring that software will be widely available; a point which may be in question when Atari release their new machine.

So, all kids out there still using 8-bit machines, with Christmas on the way, it's time to start dropping hints! Oh, and by the way, all you *adults* still using 8-bits, couldn't the phone bill wait just a *little* while longer . . . ?

16-BIT SIZZLER

●**Fast and graphically impressive** Defender **variant**

STAR RAY

Logotron, £24.95 disk

All young people have dreams of fame and adventure and you, of course, are no exception. Ever since you first saw Captain Muscle battling against the Spon-Thrigg mutants in his fighter, you've wanted to join the space academy. Then, one day, your dream comes true – you're accepted into the *StarRay* cadet school.

After several months of intensive training, including IQ and agility tests, you take the final flight examination over the barren surface of the ice planet Charon – named after the ferryman of the river Styx due to the barren appearance of this soul-destroying world. The interim period of waiting for the test results is one of the tensest periods in your life. Eventually the marks arrive and . . . you've made it! You have become a fully fledged *StarRay* pilot!

Your designated ship is a state-of-the-art gull-wing fighter craft, fitted with bog-standard military lasers and vapouriser bombs. Additional features can be auto-welded onto this ship by collecting alien munition pods (see info box).

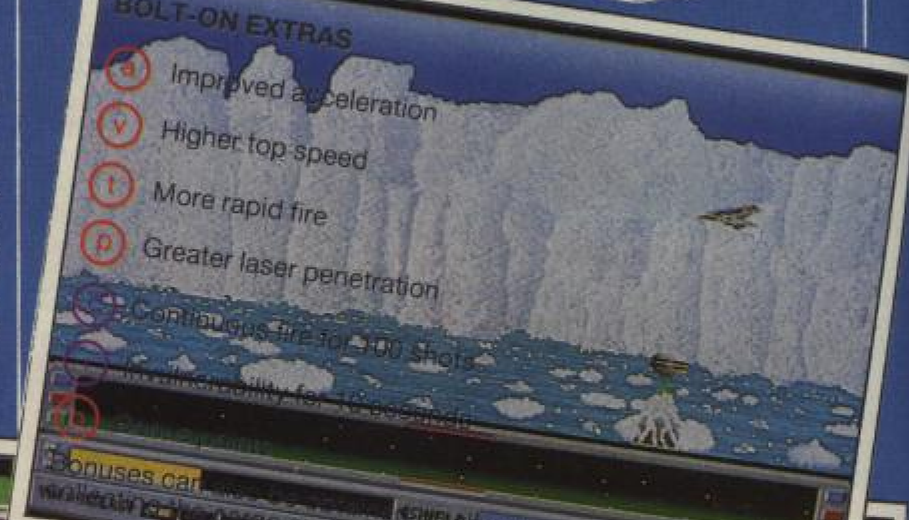
Your first tour of duty is on the planet Gorbaxa, a storage facility on the outer reaches of the Forces'



Anyone who dismisses StarRay **as nothing more than a tarted-up** Defender **obviously doesn't realise that any competently-programmed reproduction of the Williams classic is bound to be a very playable game. By adding gorgeous parallax-scrolling backdrops, marvellous sound effects and ship enhancement icons, the programmers of** StarRay **have come up with a game that's even better to play than the original! The essential fine joystick control is there too, it's just a pity that the vapourisers are detonated using the mouse button – a section of the keyboard would have been easier to find in frantic moments (though instructions are included for building a more convenient vapouriser trigger). However, minor gripes like that shouldn't put off anyone looking for a fast and addictive shoot 'em up, as this is almost certainly the best game of its type that I've ever seen.**

I first played Defender **in our local leisure centre about eight years ago and still remember being impressed by the new way of displaying the action. The only significant games at the time were** Scramble, Asteroids **and** Space Invaders **(how many readers out there actually played the original?), so naturally Eugene Jarvis' game caused a shift in the direction of video games. Lots of games since have been remoulded versions of** Defender, **and** StarRay **follows suit. Not that this is in any way a bad thing, in fact it's great! I loved** Defender, **I love** Dropzone **and now I love** Starray! **The graphics are impressively varied, with colourful multi-layer parallax scrolling and the sound – well . . . the tape containing the main tune has been blasting from my Walkman almost non-stop! Actually, a couple of records in my collection sound like this. My only reservation is the price. If it were under 20 quid it would be bordering on a Gold Medal – but, at 25 quid, I'm not sure. Buy it anyway!**





▼ The sinister alien computer complex of level four





▲ I wonder if Patrick Moore does this in the sky at night?

Network. The planet is used for holding the Kryptium Energy Cells, the major source of fuel for the huge Star Cruisers. The Cells must be constantly guarded, not just because of the rarity and value, but also because of their hazardous properties. They are linked to a series of energy towers which the alien lander craft plug into, turning them into dead spires of metal.

Next, you're posted to Sirion, a holiday planet where the dense jungle vegetation is getting just a little too dense for the inhabitants' liking, as it threatens to spread over the transport rails within a few hours. The Forces' Network have placed Exterminator Robots (intergalactic trademark) on the planet in order to hold back the creeping undergrowth, but the jungle wildlife decides to attack. Your task is to protect the robots by blasting the alien aggressors.

After the statutory home leave for family visits ('Hi, Aunty Gladys, I've brought this bit of alien spaceship for a souvenir'), you're off to Sharlon, where the gradually freezing ozone layer is being polluted by young extra-terrestrial joyriders.

Now that you've got used to the easy patrol sectors (!) you can fly out to the outer unknown regions for a spot of vagabond blasting! Voooom!

▼ Giant bees, roving prehistoric birds and mutant mosquitoes will keep you busy in level two





If it weren't for the fact that Maff, Paul and Gordo have been hogging the Amiga for the last five hours, I wouldn't be seen dead writing about Starray **– I'd be playing it. Like** Defender **in the arcades and** Dropzone **on the 64, it's one of those games that you just can't put down – not even for a bacon sandwich with a double helping of tomato sauce. Even without the gorgeous graphics, the incredibly smooth parallax scrolling, the cool and froody soundtrack, the atmospheric effects and the astonishing array of screaming, snorting, soaring, sighing aliens,** Starray **would be astoundingly addictive – with them its practically perfect. My only gripe concerns the price: as a jazzed-up version of** Defender **it's not exactly original so the most it should sell for is £20 . . . RIGHT, move over Gordo, I want a go!**

PRESENTATION 90%
Free audio cassette, good loading sequence and novel 'last game' option, but no two-player mode.

GRAPHICS 89%
Well defined with smooth scrolling, but the sprites are sometimes too small to be very distinctive.

SOUND 87%
In-game sounds vary from average to very good, but the weaker ones are made up for by the excellent loading music.

HOOKABILITY 94%
Instantly playable due to the simple blasting format.

LASTABILITY 92%
Seven levels all with differing atmospheres and harder alien waves.

OVERALL 90%
An excellent, brilliantly addictive game; £25 is a little high – but it's worth it.

Sky CHASE



A good flight sim really is my cup of PG, and a good combat flight sim is even better, but a good combat flight sim with a Bach soundtrack (the Final Movement from Brandenburg Concerto 3 in this case), is something special. Anyone who hates the incessant gauge-watching of ordinary flight sims needn't shy away from this product either, because although there's an extensive control panel, you only really need to refer constantly to one display – the Radar. This lets you get on with the pure dogfighting, which is exciting stuff, especially with a good human opponent – there's a simple manoeuvre which beats all the computer opponents every time. The enormous flexibility of the game is also worth a mention, with enough options to customise just about everything on your aircraft short of painting snarling teeth across the nose! Anyone remotely interested in fast airborne action should check this out as soon as possible.

Mirrorsoft, £19.99 disk

I was going to start this review by telling a joke about The Village People singing 'In The Air Force' but I didn't think it was very funny, so I won't. I'll talk about the game instead (Yeah, good idea, Maff – Ed).

Sky Chase is set in Fightertown USA (no, I've never heard of it either) where new Air Force recruits are trained. You take the part of one of these recruits as he embarks on a flight test which consists of head-to-head aerial dogfights set within a restricted area.

Obviously, the Air Force don't want to have expensive planes destroyed by rookie pilots blasting each other out of the skies (the paperwork for trainees killed is horrendous) so all the flying takes place on computer simulators against the machine or another cadet in one of seven types of aircraft: from an FA/18 Hornet to a paper aeroplane (believe it or not).

The display shows a first person view from the chosen fighter with your opponent displayed as a wire frame plane in your display – plus the view from their plane. If you think you're suitably hard, you can switch off the computer's display in one-player mode and rely purely on instruments only to catch the enemy.

Along with the choice of plane, various other options can be changed on the title screen. They include grid size, G-force tolerance, bullet strike area and other details.

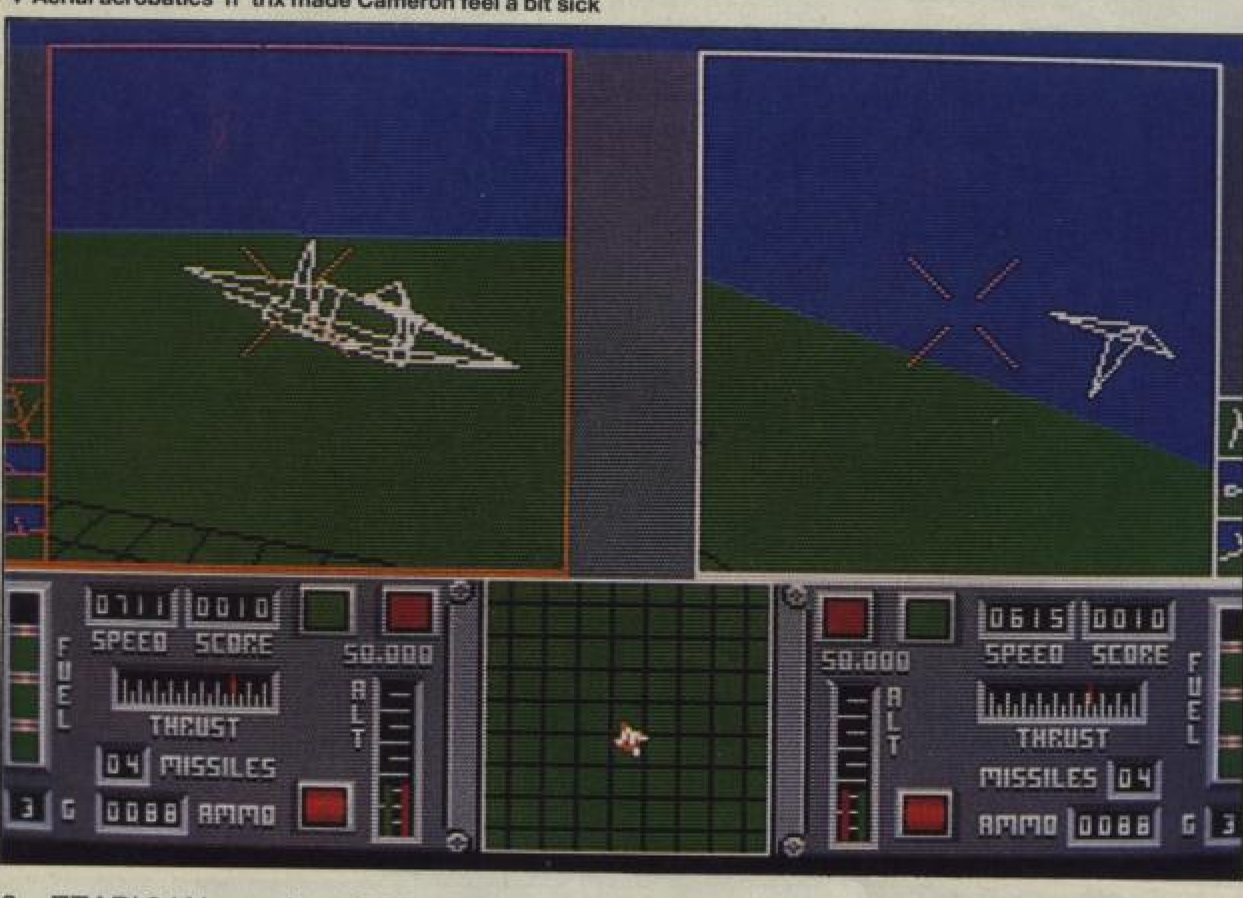


There are very few flight simulator games that I really enjoy playing, Starglider 2 and FA/18 Interceptor being notable exceptions, but Sky Chase appealed to me partly because of the simplicity of the action, since controls have been kept to a minimum. Only the bare essentials for flying and shooting have been included, so you don't end up being shot up the tailpipe while you're looking for the right button to press to do a loop. The only serious problem is that once you've played a couple of games in single player mode, it becomes rather easy to kill the enemy fighter with a couple of simple manoeuvres. In two player mode, however, the action is extremely exciting and frenetic. In fact this comment took a while to write, because Wayne (from the Art Department) kept coming down and tempting me to play the game. If you're one of those people (he says in his best Denis Norden voice) that enjoys a good gaming session with your mates, then this is a game for you.



Before I start, I'd like to say that just because there isn't a 'thumbs up' face on this comment, it doesn't mean that this game isn't good. All it means is that it should be better. The actual gameplay is excellent; the controls are easy to use, the graphics are fast and effective and the sound adds the right amount of atmosphere. The problem lies with the single player option – it's just too easy. Nine times out of ten you can loop around and blast your opponent out of the sky with your first shot. The only way to really play is in two player mode, but people may find that they are lacking the required number of players for a duel (message for the very stupid: that means they're on their own). If you're on the look out for a decent two player game then this is it, otherwise play beforehand to see if this is what you really want.

▼ Aerial acrobatics 'n' trix made Cameron feel a bit sick



PRESENTATION 93%
Very easy to control with a wealth of options.

GRAPHICS 75%
Very fast but slightly bland aircraft and ground graphics which don't really push the Amiga's capabilities.

SOUND 51%
Minimal in-game sounds and pleasant, if a little misplaced, title music.

HOOKABILITY 80%
The simplified flying action is instantly appealing.

LASTABILITY 72%
The single player option won't keep its hold on you for long, but the two player option makes up for this.

OVERALL 78%
An exhilarating flying game – at its best with two players at the controls.



ZOOM!

Discovery Software International, £19.95 disk

Here we are again with another game about round people (wot?). Well, *Pacman* was round, *Harvey Headbanger* was round and now Zoomer is round (thus ends our entry for Most Tenuous Start To An Intro Of The Year).

In this release from Discovery Software, the converters of *Arkanoid* onto the Amiga, you take the part of a rather athletic round person, running about on a grid trying to change the tile colours. This is done by surrounding the square with your trail, which you automatically leave behind. If you manage to change all the squares, you can move on to the next plane.

As always, however, there are the nasty monsters of Zoomland trying to kill you, each with their own movement characteristics (see MONSTERS box).

Also littered around the maze are objects to help you in your contest, either giving you an advantage or giving the monsters a disadvantage (see PICK UP box). If you lose all three lives before completing 50 levels then the monsters win and you lose (boo-hoo!).

MONSTERS


JAGGERNAUT: Follows Zoomer around the grid. One touch is fatal


WORMLETTS: Wander around rubbing out Zoomer's trail


ANGLEHEADS: Randomly wander the grid. Slow Zoomer down when touched


SPHEROIDS: Walk up and down one line. One touch is fatal


BLACK HOLES: Swallow Zoomer up

PICK-UPS


ICE CUBES: Stop the enemy cold (groan)


SWEETS: Bonus score or more speed


MONEY BAGS: Bonus score


APPLE: Fills all squares it touches


POTION: Temporary immunity


GLUE: Slows down the monsters


ROCKET: Finishes the grid


MYSTERY: Who knows . . . ?



▲ **Cameron's been drawing pretty patterns – he doesn't seem to realise it's the squares he's got to fill**

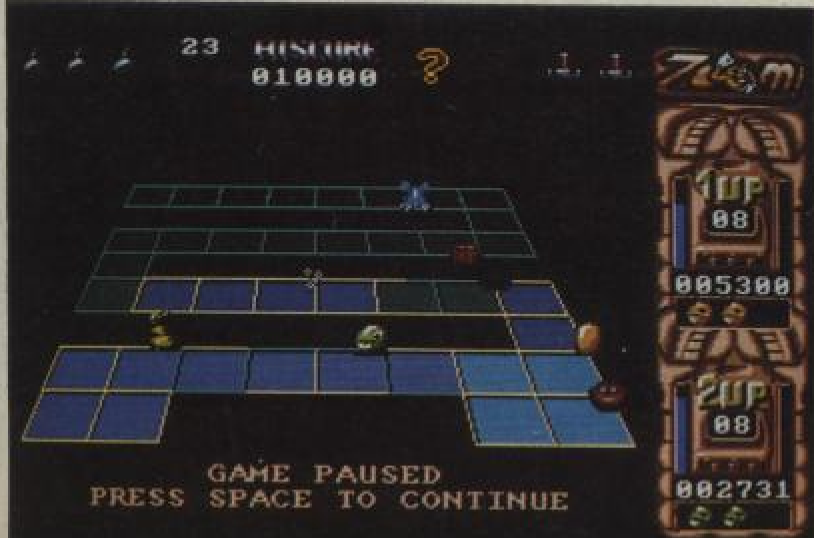


It's interesting watching the games industry going back to its roots, and turning up games like Blasteroids, PacMania, Better Dead Than Alien **and now** Zoom!, **which is a 3D version of** Amidar. **Like the other games I've mentioned,** Zoom! **proves that the old format isn't at all tired out, and the addition of excellent graphics and good sounds help it stand out in today's market full of innovations. Gameplay is simplistic, but the frenetic chaseabout action provides loads of fun. The dual player mode and collectable icons boost the enjoyment as ever, but I can see the action becoming a teensy bit repetitive over 50 levels which just provide differing screen layouts. Even so, twenty quid is a reasonable price to pay for such classy entertainment, and I'd say** Zoom! **is definitely a game you should look up.**



I like games like this, because they're really **silly, appealing to my childish sense of humour. I could tell just from the loading screen that the game was going to be a bit loony, but when I saw the stage-show introduction I just burst out laughing! Little round people dancing about all over the place; brilliant! Some of the music is very well done . . . no, I tell a lie** all **of the music is very well done! The intro piece is particularly good (I'm sure I've heard it somewhere before . . .), suiting the show wonderfully. The game itself is very addictive, not to say nerve-wracking at times, bringing cries of 'Ooh!, 'Agh!' and 'Yoiks!' after turning along a line straight across the path of a monster. If you like a bit of silliness as well as a playable game, then buy** Zoom!

▼ **Don't get too near those gorgeous, pouting lips – one kiss and they'll swallow you up**



PRESENTATION 92%
Fantastic introduction piece, ability to start on any of the first ten levels and numerous humorous in-game touches.

GRAPHICS 90%
Brilliant sprites, funny animation and all-round good use of colour.

SOUND 94%
A load of great samples and tunes.

HOOKABILITY 90%
The simple gameplay is an absolute doddle to get into . . .

LASTABILITY 91%
. . . and it's just as easy to get completely hooked.

OVERALL 89%
Another old game given a new lease of life and it's well funny to boot!


FIVE FIST-FULLS OF
MOTOR MASSACRE
The holocaust has come, laying waste cities, continents and civilisation. Out of the devastation emerges a breed of survivors merciless in their greed for simple possessions, barbaric in their thirst for power and dominance. To live even a day is hell, to achieve fame and wealth is deadly. You must fight your way to the Demon Dome and then compete in the most horrifying carnival of motor destruction ever conceived, forcing your opponents into the endless chasms of darkness, before you emerge Supreme Gladiator... supreme that is until the next round of motor massacre.
CBM 64/128 £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
AMSTRAD £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
SPECTRUM £7.99 cassette £12.99 disk
ATARI ST £19.99 disk AMIGA £19.99 disk
TECHNO COP
Step into the future... technology has overtaken society – the rich are richer, the poor are poorer – chaos, unrest, destruction... lawlessness reigns, terror rules. But this is your territory, your assignment with death. These are your streets and you have volunteered to clean out the scum, destroy the streetgangs and eliminate the deviants that pollute your city. Yes you have your beloved sleek racer, but armed with only stun gun and keep net what skills do you possess to neutralize the many hundreds who lie in wait for you? Being a cop is always dangerous, being a cop of the future is a step into the unknown.
CBM 64/128 £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
AMSTRAD £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
SPECTRUM £7.99 cassette £12.99 disk
ATARI ST £19.99 disk IBM PC £19.99 disk
AMIGA £19.99 disk
CBM 64/128
£9.99 cassette
£14.99 disk
AMSTRAD
£9.99 cassette
£14.99 disk
SPECTRUM
£7.99 cassette
£12.99 disk
GREMLIN
Screen shots from various formats.
Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House,


FEROCIOUS ACTION
DARK FUSION
Only the elite pass the three phase test of the Corps of Guardian Warriors – co-ordinated fury in destruction of the mutant hordes of the underworld; supreme command skills in frantic defence against the invading alien space fleets and merciless nerve in bloody battle against the monster of the Pit of Despair. Then the final chilling decision – enter the Metamorphosis Chamber to fuse lifeforms with your vanquished foe or face your next challenge with only the powers your mortal form bestows on you.
BUTCHER HILL
Tension mounts as you navigate the murky waters in your motorised dinghy, seeking out vital supplies and ammunition careful to avoid enemy mines and aerial bombardment. Landfall... deep in the heart of the Vietnamese jungle, heavy with the odour of death, concealing deadly mantraps and enemy gunposts. Panic... an unknown village. Friend of foe? Whichever – the final obstacle between you and your ultimate goal– the assault on Butcher Hill.
CBM 64/128 £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
AMSTRAD £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
SPECTRUM £7.99 cassette £12.99 disk
ATARI ST £19.99 disk AMIGA £19.99 disk
ARTURA
Stand proud Artura – son of Pendragon – and set forth on your quest to unite the warring kingdoms of Albion in this age of bloody war and mysterious magickes. Your task is to rescue Nimue from the clutches of your evil half-sister, Morgause for which only your fearless nerve and superior fighting skills and the mystical wheel of Cerriddwen will overcome the ghouls, spiders, soldiers and giant rats you encounter.
CBM 64/128 £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
AMSTRAD £9.99 cassette £14.99 disk
SPECTRUM £7.99 cassette £12.99 disk
ATARI ST £19.99 disk
BUTCHER HILL
Artura
GREMLIN
se,
10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: 0742 753423.

SCRABBLE DE LUXE

Leisure Genius, £19.95 disk, mouse with keys

A bedroom somewhere in the world . . .
Player one: 'There's no such word as pyx.'
Player two: 'Yes there is, I've seen it.'
Player one: 'Well let's look it up then.'
Player one scrabbles through a dictionary.
Player one: 'Here. A pyx is a chest in which coins from the British mint are weighed. Now that's on a triple word so that's 54 points.'
Player two beats player one senseless with the dictionary.

If this means nothing to you then you've probably never played *Scrabble*, a game which causes more arguments than *Trivial Pursuit* and *Monopoly* put together! This new release from Leisure Genius contains all the elements of the original board game.

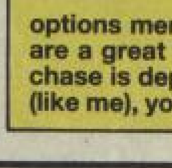
It opens by presenting a series of options menus, allowing you to set the number of players, the time limit and whether to see the tiles and the computer thinking. The board is then drawn and play begins.

You must enter a word on the keyboard and select whether it





For years all Scrabble **has meant to me is boring Sunday afternoons visiting relatives, when they decide to get the old games out after** Antiques Roadshow **has finished. For this reason (not to mention the poor reception the other versions were given) I wonder about how wise it is to release an Amiga version. I suppose that putting it onto the Amiga enables more words to be stored in the memory, but the subject matter doesn't really allow the programmers to stretch the machine to its limits. If it had animated figures playing the game and digitised speech, maybe, but then that would be just plain silly. What we're offered is simply a standard** Scrabble **game with nice presentation: nothing more, nothing less.**



Scrabble **is rather a tame idea for a computer game in today's fast-paced market, but an old classic is always worth a try. Board and tiles are very well displayed, and are as functional as their physical equivalents, once familiarity has been gained. The options menu adds a lot to the game – hints and tile reshuffles are a great help if you're stuck for a word. The viability of purchase is dependent on whether you like board games; if you do (like me), you'll love this conversion. If not, forget it.**

BIONIC COMMANDO

GO!, £24.99 disk

Ten years ago, alien forces invaded planet Earth (although I can't say I noticed. No, that's silly. Forget I said it). They began to drain the planet of its valuable resources, leaving behind nothing but desolation. Since these forces now control the food and water supplies, they have been able to impose a tyrannical rule over the human race, threatening the use of a powerful missile to destroy the globe if their needs are not met.

An elite fighting force has been in secret training and is now ready to defeat the cruel alien leaders. These are . . . the *Bionic Commandos*.

Soldiers are hand picked and brought to the peak of physical fitness to deal with any eventuality. After this training they are given a further advantage; every Commando is fitted with an extending bionic arm, useful for climbing and swinging through trees, swatting enemies and catching objects.

You play the part of one of these Commandos, heading the infiltration team into the enemy base. The game begins with you being dropped by parachute into the forest at the entrance to the enemy stron-

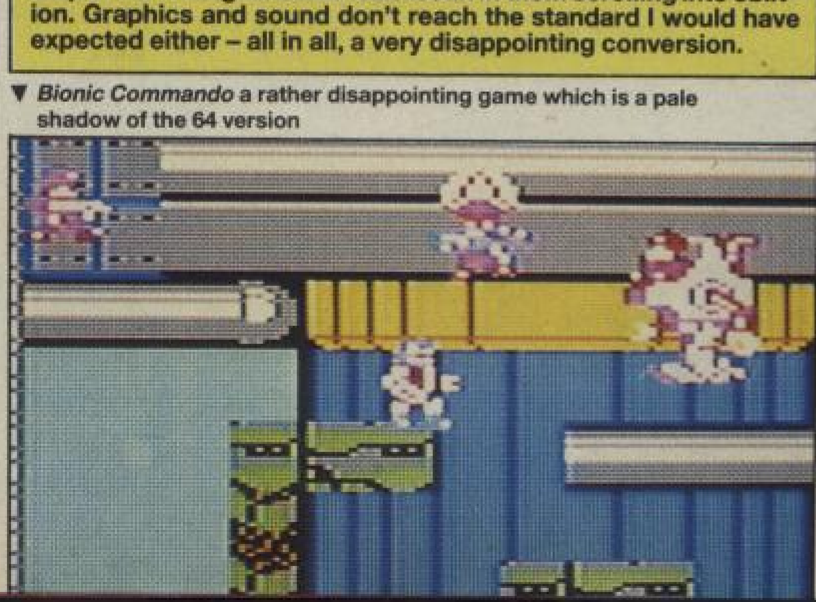


I bought an Amiga secure in the knowledge that any 16-bit arcade conversions would be pretty damned close to the coin-op originals. The launch of Bionic Commando **has proved to me that this is most certainly not the case, because, quite frankly, the game is utter pigeon-poo. The backgrounds and sprites are passable and the sound is quite pleasant, but the gameplay is crippled by unfair attack patterns right from level one and the worst use of Amiga screen scrolling I've seen to date. Swinging the bionic arm out half a dozen times just to** *see* **a branch does not, in my opinion, make for heaps of playability. I could do better swinging myself with a bit of clothes line and a tent peg (but that's not advisable at home, kids!). Play the 64 version if you can, but if you can't, that's still no excuse for wasting money on the Amiga version.**



What have GO! done to the game that I enjoyed so much on the 64? What aggravates me most is the fact that the tragic ruin of the gameplay is the screen scrolling, which I would have thought was easily accomplished with the powerful graphics hardware inside the Amiga. Extending the grappling claw to something off-screen leaves the program bewildered as it can't scroll fast enough, so it quickly shunts the screen a few pixels in the required direction and retracts the arm before it can grab something. When you finally do get a claw-hold (several extensions later), you've probably been overrun by enemy soldiers who've suddenly appeared from the new screen section. The bad scrolling also affects weapons collection as shooting goodies frequently drops them into a corner of the screen, so of course, one step in the wrong direction can result in them scrolling into oblivion. Graphics and sound don't reach the standard I would have expected either – all in all, a very disappointing conversion.

▼ *Bionic Commando* a rather disappointing game which is a pale shadow of the 64 version



should go across or down. The start point is clicked on with the mouse and the word placed on the board. You can decide at this point to reject the word and enter a new one if the score is below what you expected. Play continues thus until all the tiles are drawn or there are no more spaces for words.

Various other options are included, such as 'hints' from the computer, the ability to juggle the letters in your rack and an option to replace some or all of the letters in your rack.

PRESENTATION 90%
Numerous options and easy controls.

GRAPHICS 73%
Realistic board and tiles, with clear overall appearance.

SOUND 8%
The odd ping, but nothing else.

HOOKABILITY 63%
Well . . . how much does *Scrabble* grab you?

LASTABILITY 63%
Again, depends on how much you like *Scrabble*.

OVERALL 70%
Nicely presented conversion of a subject which has obvious limitations.

ghold. The forest is patrolled by troops of enemy soldiers, armed with grenades and rifles, as well as killer bees and deadly flying creatures that biff you from above.

If you can survive this, you then travel into the aliens' castle dodging robots and cannons, followed by the base itself. At the end of the fifth stage lies the central launching computer, the destruction of which should ensure the safety of the human race.

PRESENTATION 34%
Disastrous control method, no front end and slow multiload give the player an instantly poor impression.

GRAPHICS 69%
Some beautiful backgrounds and adequate sprites, but *awful* scrolling.

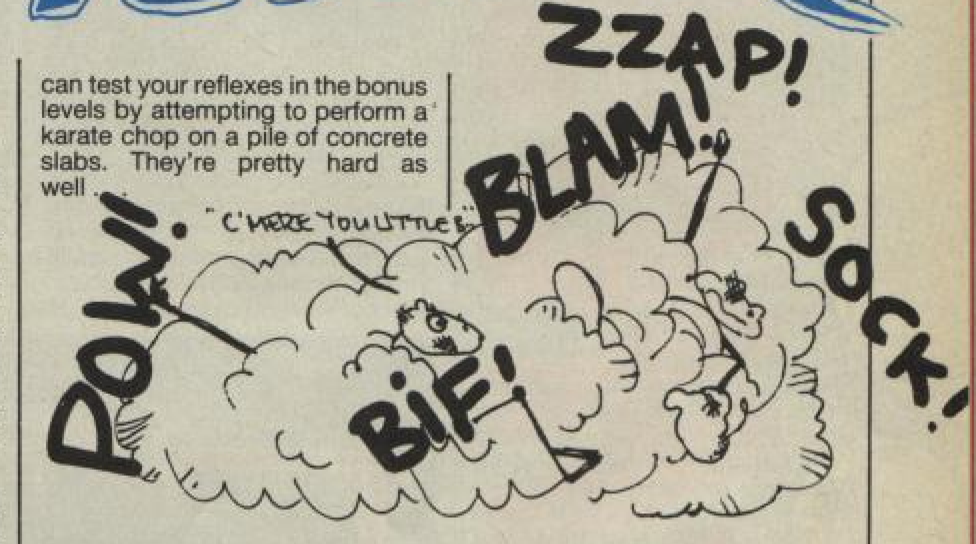
SOUND 80%
Good tunes (especially level two), but the Amiga can do better.

HOOKABILITY 38%
The going is just too tough from the outset.

LASTABILITY 37%
Five large and well drawn levels, but the process is frustrating and ultimately boring.

OVERALL 35%
A very disappointing conversion considering the power of the machine.

STREET FIGHTER



Capcom, £24.99 disk

Hard is not the word for it. You're harder than hard, harder than very hard, you're even harder than the hardest that ever . . . erm . . . was *really* hard. You're so hard, in fact, that you've decided to prove it to the rest of the world. The meanest, nastiest, vilest street fighters of five different nations have agreed to take you on in one of the dirtiest, most underhand, no-holds-barred street fighting contests in the universe ever.

As Ryu you take on ten well-hard geezers in locations ranging from a railway siding somewhere in America to a pagoda some place in Japan. These are not the sort of guys you'd like to meet on a dark night. Most of them haven't got any more elaborate weapons than their hands and feet but one or two have raided their piggybanks and come equipped with shurikens, bits of lead piping and even a pair of boxing gloves.

Each opponent is faced separately: whoever gains the best of three bouts is the winner. In two-player mode Ryu and Ken (not Barbie's Ken, however) battle it out first to decide which one will take on the rest of the world.

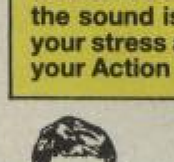
Just to show off even more you can test your reflexes in the bonus levels by attempting to perform a karate chop on a pile of concrete slabs. They're pretty hard as well . . .



▲ Even though he's twice your size, this Block Head is *still* dead easy to beat



I've just spent about half and hour playing Street Fighter **and I still haven't worked off all my excess aggression. I mean, how can you work off** any **aggression when all your opponents are so easy to beat? A couple of nifty ankle blows and all these supposedly rough, tough street fighters collapse in a pathetic heap at your feet. The two-player game might have increased the lastability quite a bit but as it's only a play-off between Ryu and Ken, it doesn't. I could accuse Capcom of producing another one of those 'pretty but totally unplayable' Amiga games but that wouldn't be true – all the graphics are fairly unremarkable and the sound isn't that much better. So, if you want to work off all your stress and tension, forget about** Street Fighter **and play with your Action Man.**



If this is a top-quality beat 'em up then I'm a one-eyed Rumanian greengrocer. Talk about easy – you don't even need to study the moves to be able to knock practically everyone out in under a minute. I got right through to the last toughie on my first go – which doesn't exactly say much for the product's lastability. I can't say I was overly impressed by the graphics, the sound or the slow-motion gameplay – in fact I can't say I was overly impressed by anything at all. Even the bonus section takes ages to react to your frantic pushing of the joystick – by which time your energy bar has gone back down to minimum (great). If you're after a beat 'em up leave this one lying on the shelf.

PRESENTATION 27%
Option to start in any one of four countries plus the odd message from your street fighting friends. No real two-player option, though.

GRAPHICS 44%
Finely detailed characters, unexceptional backdrops; very slow and jerky movement.

SOUND 40%
Fairly standard tune – nothing special.

HOOKABILITY 39%
As you're beating everyone in sight you'll want to play through it once . . .

LASTABILITY 15%
. . . but not twice.

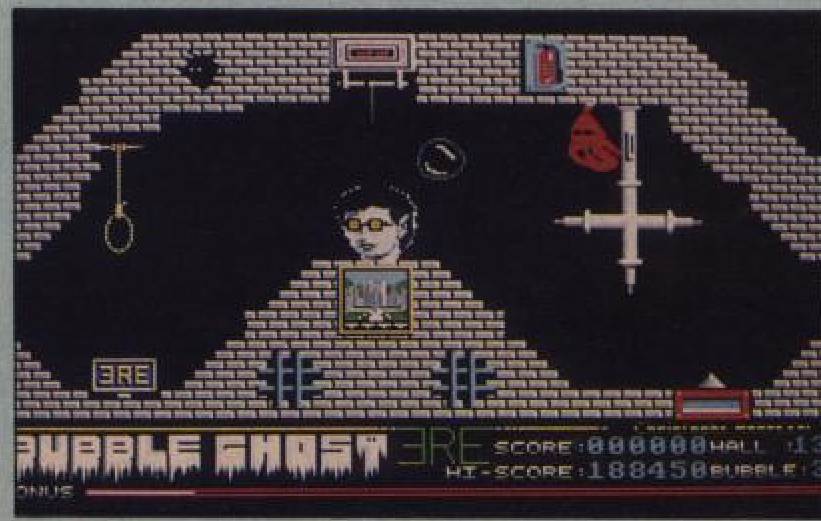
OVERALL 21%
So feeble that you really will be able to beat 'em *all* up – first go.

BUBBLE GHOST

Infogrames, £19.95 disk

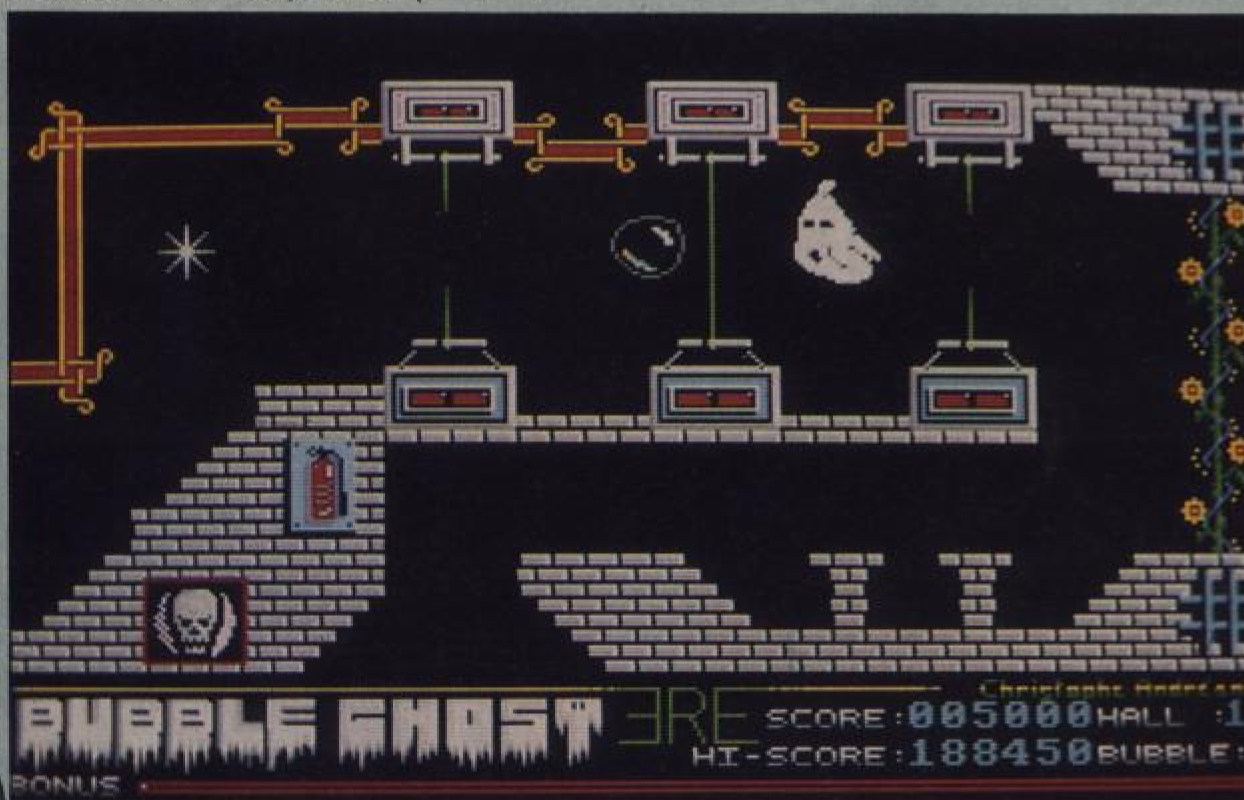
A quick haunt around that cosy castle, a nifty screech at its occupants and a bit of telekinesis in a set of spotted designer sheets is all you'd set your heart on. 'It'll be a laugh,' you thought to yourself, 'appearing at windows, sticking an axe through my leg, carrying my head in my arms, walking around in suits of armour, letting rip with blood-curdling screams – well rad'. As it turns out, a laugh is just about the only thing you didn't get. A shame, because you got a lot more than you bargained for.

When the window you climbed through slammed behind you and the nasty rain was shut out, even your spectral form couldn't pass through it again. There was . . . are you sure you're ready for this?



▲ That's the spirit! (Corny Captions Inc)

▼ There's a ghost in the machine . . . er . . . well, in the *house* anyway



▼ (Cue West Ham supporters) 'I'm forever blowing bubbles . . .'

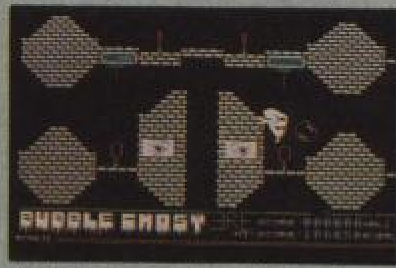


It's not very nice . . . OK, brace yourself . . . (da-da-DAAA!) a wickedly nasty, horribly bloodthirsty, incredibly bad (urggggh!) EVIL FORCE living in the haunted castle (boo, hiss)!

Brian the terrible (and he really is terrible, you can't get much more terribler than Brian) has done a job on you good and proper. As if being a right nasty piece of work (and ugly too) isn't enough, he's nicked your eternal soul. Not that he wants to do anything with it: one look and he's totally bored, Brian would much rather tear a chicken limb from limb. In fact, he's just plain cruel (probably tore the legs off spiders when he was a kid) and leaves it bobbing tantalisingly in front of you, suspended in a soap bubble (the rotter!).

You're a ghost (but a very nice one, honest), so you can't exactly grab hold of it: touch it and your hand just goes right through. There's nothing for it – you've got to find another way of taking it with you when (or should that be if?) you escape.

So what can you do? Think, think, think, scratch your head a bit, think a bit more, summon up your guardian spirit . . . oh no that's in the bubble . . . eat a banana, take a bath, blow – yeah, that's it – blow the bubble about! Dead (geddit?) easy!



▲ Life for a ghostly entity is not as straightforward as it seems

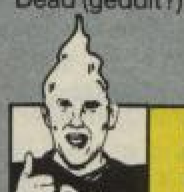
Dead easy my bottom! You have to flip around the bubble, huffing and puffing and following it about. And you've got to remember – this is the home of an evil spirit (boo, hiss – really loudly this time), so there are plenty of traps littered all over the shop: nasty impaling spikes that pierce the bubble, evil-looking heads (haven't they got any manners staring at you like that?) which block your path, fans to blow you off-course and burning candles – and you know what happens when a bubble crosses a candle flame, don't you?

But don't forget that bubbles aren't the only things that you can blow about (kyak, kyak! Quiet at the back, missus!). After all, what happens to candles when you blow at them?

Let's hope they're non-flammable designer sheets.

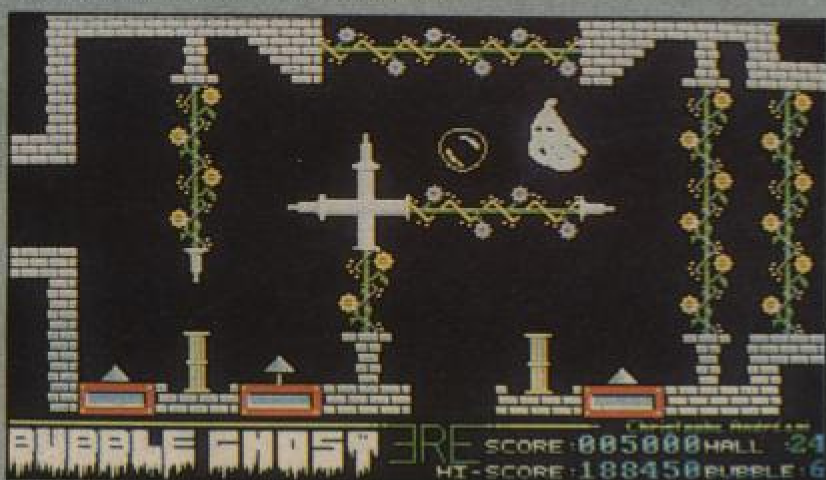


Anyone who thinks that computer games are lacking in imagination or originality at the moment would be forced to change their mind after playing Bubble Ghost**. The concept of a ghost blowing his soul around a castle full of spiked objects is just so-o-o-o wierd! Having said that, I have to stress that it's great fun to play, each screen requiring even more dexterous mouse handling than the last – things get very tricky on the later levels. A special mention must go to the game's use of sound, which comprises a catchy title tune (which Maff informs me is 'Well Atmospheric'), and some humorously appropriate sound effects, such as the ghost's hacking cough when he's made to blow for too long. If your software collection is crying out for something different,** Bubble Ghost **is just what you're looking for.**



Fans of the cute and curious, take a look at this! Bubble Ghost **is one of that increasingly rare breed, the totally original game. Furthermore, unlike many such oddities, the gameplay is not so way out that the player is left confused as to what's going on. In fact, the idea is very simple but success demands quite a bit of deft mouse-manoeuvering, especially as you progress to the later halls. The practice option is very handy indeed, but the game would benefit from a level select system. The early halls are too easy to provide a lasting challenge so it becomes slightly tedious to have to negotiate them to get back to where you were last game. But why am I being so pernickety when a game is as much fun as this? Erm, I don't know, now you come to ask . . .**

▼ Does this bubble go to Whitstabubble?





Whenever I play games that have been converted from one 16-bit machine to another, I always think 'What will be different?', 'Will the gameplay be as good?' and other equally fascinating things (we get the general idea, Maff – Ed). I've played Bubble Ghost **on the Atari ST a few times, and these questions cropped up when I loaded up the Amiga version. Luckily there was nothing to worry about. As soon as the impressive title screen appeared, backed by the amazing music, I realised that the programmers at ERE had used the extra power of the Amiga to good effect. The game itself has lost none of the addictive qualities of its Atari incarnation, in fact I'd say that the wonderful sampled effects make it even better! I know it may not look so great in the screenshots (and it's not that exciting to watch someone else playing) but when you have a go for yourself, that's when** Bubble Ghost **comes into its own.**

▼ The bubble-blowing banshee bounces back



PRESENTATION 84%
High score table, demo and practice modes and loads of humorous touches.

GRAPHICS 83%
Lovely title screen and amusing in-game graphics. Maybe a bit simple, though.

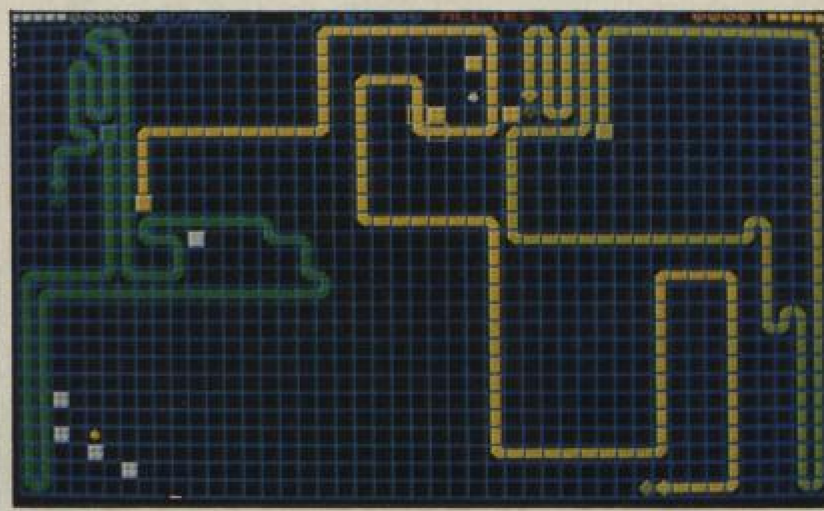
SOUND 90%
Brilliant loading tune and appropriately funny spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 93%
Instantly playable due to the light-hearted content.

LASTABILITY 86%
Once you get used to it, the game may seem slightly easy, but most players will take a while to get through all 40 rooms.

OVERALL 88%
An enjoyable and amusing game which many gamers will find a bit of a larf.

TRACERS



▲ Not as much fun as a poke in the eye with a pointed stick – but a decent 'light-cycle' game nonetheless

Microillusions, £19.95 disk

In the 21st century every major city in the world is linked to one central computer-controlled system. Not surprisingly, police are already on the trail of hackers.

The Tracers' battle against the hackers is depicted on a grid of squares, each of which represents a node. They move across the grid leaving a trail of corrupted nodes which cannot be passed through until that hacker is taken off-line. Also on the grid, of course, is the Tracer, who similarly lays an impassable wall of nodes around the hackers, hoping to force them into a trap.

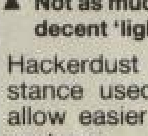
The hackers aren't stupid, though, and are just as keen to see you leave the system, so they employ the same entrapment strategies to get rid of you.

Because every user's mind is linked to the system, being thrown out can cause physical pain and terrible psychic damage – an experience known as a 'burn'. Quite obviously, a person can only stand so many burns before signing for a one way ticket to Dr Julius' Laughing Academy, but a burn's effects can be overcome to a certain degree by picking up Hackerdust – a narcotic substance used by the hackers to allow easier entry into computer systems.

Your mission as a rookie Tracer starts with the selection of a piece of music designed to increase adrenalin flow in the 'pilot' and then choosing a tactic. The hackers in the net monitor these decisions all the time.



I may be getting old, but I'm afraid Tracers' **uncomplicated line-drawing action is just too old-fashioned for me. After that statement you're probably wondering why I liked this month's other Tron game,** Atron 5000, **so much. With two players, the action in** Atron **gets really aggressive as items are picked up and activated with a malicious cackle as you make your opponent bring about his own demise. With** Tracers **the feeling of kill-or-be-killed isn't really brought across as well, because winning is simply a matter of fencing your opponent in. The turbo-charger doesn't really add any thrills because the fuel supply is so limited, and the different games don't seem to boost enjoyment either. In case you haven't guessed it yet, I would much rather spend £14.95 on** Atron 5000 **than £19.95 on** Tracers.



Tron**-style games aren't the most usual thing to be seen on computers, so it's something of a coincidence that several should come in for review in the same Issue.** Tracers **follows the format set in games like** Blind Alley **on the Spectrum all those years ago. The layout is more grid-like and precise than the randomness of** Atron 5000, **which means that the game must be played in a different way – each has its own strengths. The graphics aren't exactly state-of-the-art, but then a game like this doesn't call for incredible graphics. The sound, on the other hand, could have been improved, as all it consists of is a few pings, crunches and annoying drum and didgeridoo bass-lines – although on winning a level you're treated to a nice mandolin riff which is reminiscent of Clannad's** Legend. **Out of the two 'light-bike' games this month, I prefer** Atron, **but you really should take a good look at both before buying either.**

SUB BATTLE SIMULATOR

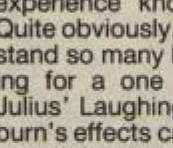
Epyx, £24.99 disk

Relive the naval battles which made history in World War II – and without even leaving your armchair to enter the nearest time machine. This game gives you the Captain's cap and leaves you to it, beneath the waves of oceans seething with hostile vessels all eager to give you a good kick up the stern.

The gauges and buttons essential to the control of a submarine, such as depth, heading and speed indicators are all presented on one screen. Also shown are two subscreens which display maps, a side view of the submarine, status readouts, RADAR and SONAR pictures and exterior views from the top of the conning tower, through binoculars (7X magnification) and, of course, through the periscope (yaaawn . . .) Also on the control panel is a message window which relays warnings and information from the crew.

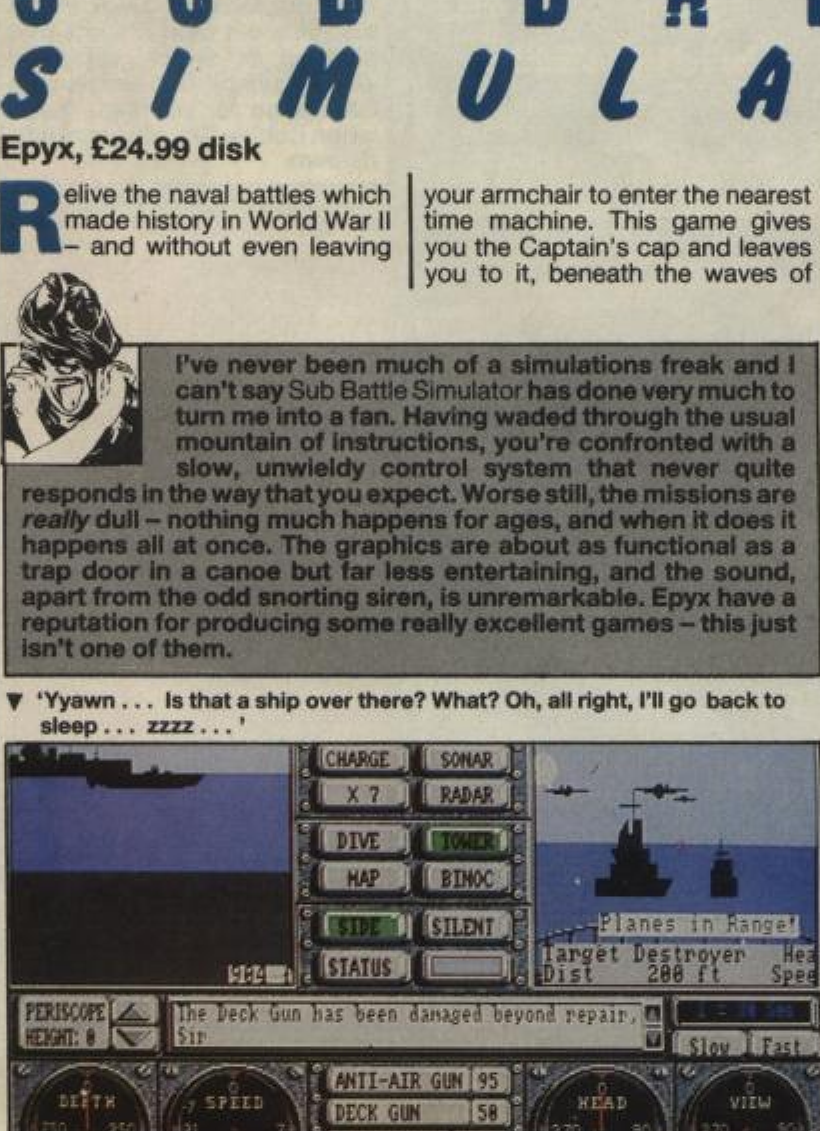
In addition to a target practice mode, there are 60 different missions to complete, 24 in which you play an American captain fighting the Japanese in the Pacific, and 36 in which you command a German U-Boat against British and American shipping.

To combat the onslaught of enemy planes, aircraft carriers, destroyers and patrol boats, your submarine is equipped with forward and aft-firing torpedoes, a



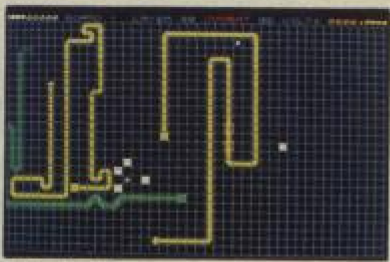
I've never been much of a simulations freak and I can't say Sub Battle Simulator **has done very much to turn me into a fan. Having waded through the usual mountain of instructions, you're confronted with a slow, unwieldy control system that never quite responds in the way that you expect. Worse still, the missions are *really* dull – nothing much happens for ages, and when it does it happens all at once. The graphics are about as functional as a trap door in a canoe but far less entertaining, and the sound, apart from the odd snorting siren, is unremarkable. Epyx have a reputation for producing some really excellent games – this just isn't one of them.**

▼ 'Yyawn . . . Is that a ship over there? What? Oh, all right, I'll go back to sleep . . . zzzz . . .'





Well, I'm sad to say it, but this seems to confirm that the Epyx label is no longer the mark of guaranteed quality it once was. It's not that Sub Battle Simulator **is bad, it's just that it doesn't really have anything major going for it – bland and unconvincing graphics, no incredible sound, just lots of slow and rather uninteresting gameplay. The speed at which the whole game runs is very unsatisfactory: selecting something like the SONAR display means several seconds of disk access, during which the game freezes, and in certain cases you can hear shells exploding around you and then see the shells exploding next to you about half a second later. The very first line of the instruction manual says, 'First of all, forget you're using a simulation', but how can you when there are so many unconvincing elements which just should not be there on an Amiga game? If period naval warfare is your poison you might be able to stick with the game, but I doubt whether others will take to** Sub Battle Simulator.



▲ Looks like someone's in trouble, Brian

Once all the hackers in a sector have been destroyed, you move on to the next, tougher 'precinct'.

PRESENTATION 80%
Selection of several different types of game styles and musical accompaniments.

GRAPHICS 42%
Very simple grid and squares layout, but the game doesn't demand fancy graphics.

SOUND 59%
Consists mainly of nice jingles and incessant drum sequences.

HOOKABILITY 82%
Games of this type are always initially addictive.

LASTABILITY 69%
Progress through the levels only brings increasingly cluttered, and hence more hazardous, screen layouts.

OVERALL 74%
A very good example of a *Tron*-style game with its share of strengths and weaknesses.

deck gun and an anti-aircraft gun. All are targeted and ranged automatically through the periscope.

Missions usually last for several hours and so the programmers have thoughtfully supplied options for loading and saving games to disk. 'Snice, innit?

PRESENTATION 69%
Keyboard reference guide comes in handy, but trying to keep all the controls on one screen has resulted in the display looking cramped.

GRAPHICS 42%
Screen update is slow and ship graphics are only silhouettes, so they aren't very convincing.

SOUND 45%
Reasonable samples of sirens, firing torpedoes and explosions.

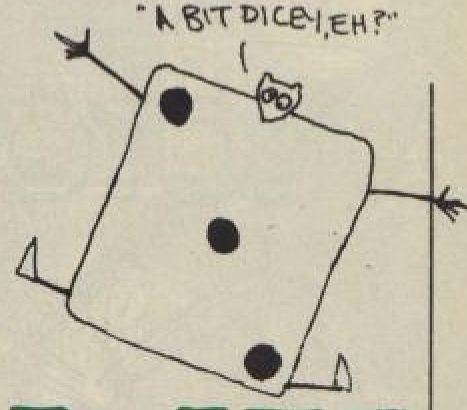
HOOKABILITY 51%
Lack of atmosphere hampers the attraction of in-depth missions.

LASTABILITY 57%
60 (woooh!) challenging missions to complete, but nothing really exciting to do.

OVERALL 42%
An unatmospheric and expensive sub sim, lacking any really interesting features.



craps ACADEMY



Microillusions, £19.95 disk



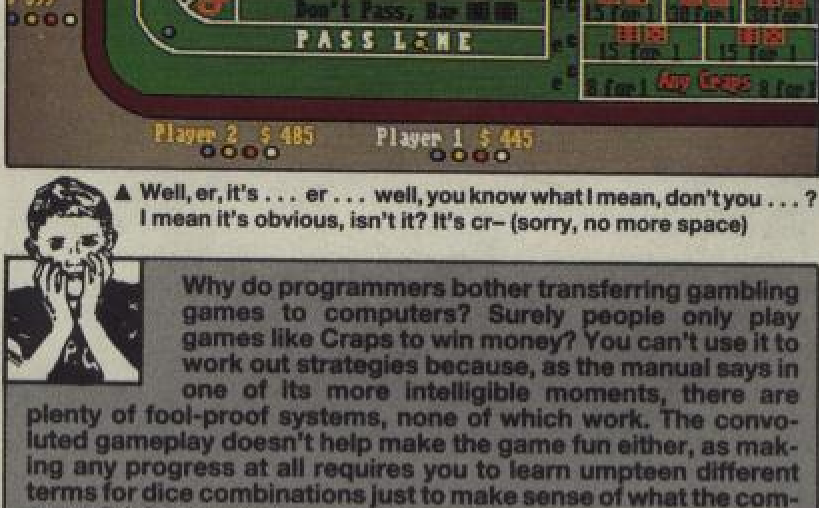
If you're prepared to take the risk, one of the fastest ways to big money these days is a quick flutter – and next on the list is gambling. Playing the tables in Las Vegas is a bit of a pose, but when the tables win the unlucky gambler is left without a tuxedo to his name.

Now the risks of such vices are gone. *Craps Academy* allows you to lose your shirt without any risk of bankruptcy or having your kneecaps shot off by casino-owning gangsters.

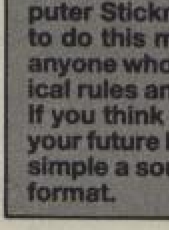
This is an icon-driven simulation of Craps, in which players place wagers on the roll of a pair of turds. No. Dice. A turn at the table is begun by setting the amount you wish to bet. You then select one of the several types of bet available by placing your chips into an outlined area of the table. The table display is three screens long, so you can imagine that the betting options are quite extensive, covering just about all combinations of roll, each with its own set of odds and its own silly name.

Select the *Roll Dice* icon and watch the dice bounce down the table. The stickman (the person who runs the game) then comments on who wins what and the chips are reapportioned accordingly.

Play passes thus between up to four gamblers until only one remains solvent.



▲ Well, er, it's . . . er . . . well, you know what I mean, don't you . . . ? I mean it's obvious, isn't it? It's cr– (sorry, no more space)



Why do programmers bother transferring gambling games to computers? Surely people only play games like Craps to win money? You can't use it to work out strategies because, as the manual says in one of its more intelligible moments, there are plenty of fool-proof systems, none of which work. The convoluted gameplay doesn't help make the game fun either, as making any progress at all requires you to learn umpteen different terms for dice combinations just to make sense of what the computer Stickman is telling you. After making concentrated efforts to do this my brain was quite honestly tied in knots, and I envy anyone who can actually understand the multitude of mathematical rules and relationships between bet types, points and odds. If you think playing Craps is likely to be a valuable social skill in your future life, then by all means take a look at this. I'm much too simple a soul to enjoy learning the game in such an unrewarding format.



Craps Academy is all very nicely presented, what with its scrolling table, extensive use of icons and instructional pull-down menus, but I'm afraid it has the same fundamental problem as all other gambling games. There's little point playing a gambling game such as Craps if all you're going to get out of it are a few extra pixels in your corner of the screen. For this reason I don't think the game would even appeal to real-life Craps players unless they were trying to wean themselves off their gambling habit. Novice gamblers would no doubt also be put off by the incredible amount of jargon used in the rules, which read like a Government White Paper. There are so many things to bear in mind just when placing a bet that play is hideously overcomplicated and consequently Craps Academy is not much fun at all.

PRESENTATION 75%
Beautifully presented on screen, with extensive use of menus and icons, but the instruction manual hasn't been written with the novice in mind.

GRAPHICS 60%
Nicely drawn and smoothly animated table and dice, but that's it.

SOUND 25%
Not much apart from sampled chip-counting and dice-rolling effects

HOOKABILITY 24%
Complicated instructions make it very difficult to get into unless you've played the game before.

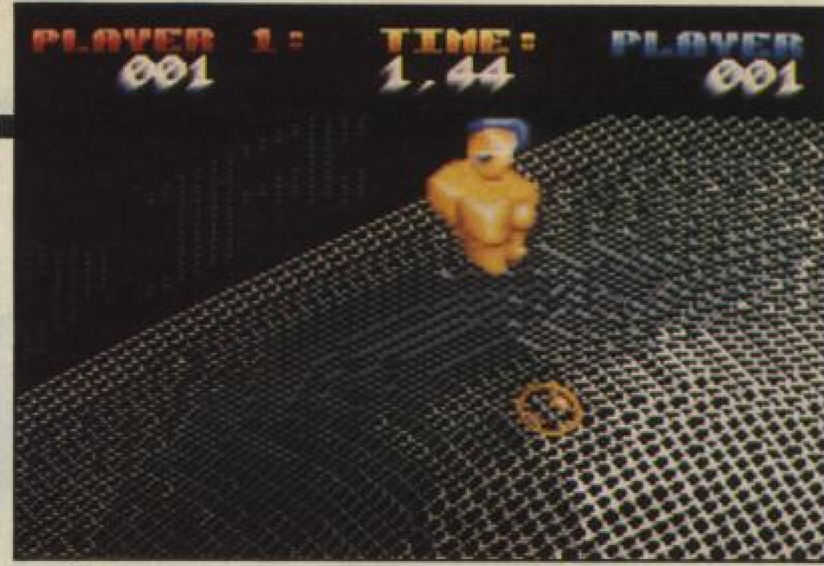
LASTABILITY 27%
Little to play for except extra chip graphics.

OVERALL 26%
A complicated and unrewarding gambling game.

16-BIT

VECTORBALL



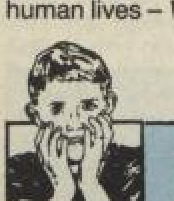


▲ Goalmouth action and the crowd go wild

MAD, £9.99 disk

The smart alec designers of the future have devised a revolutionary game that poses absolutely no danger to human lives – *Vectorball.*

Two robot protagonists battle it out on pitches constructed on hills, ridges and valleys. You use your droid to put a ball into the opposition's goal area at the far end of the pitch – before an opposing droid bumps it away and steals possession. Simple, eh?



Phwoar! Is this game brilliant? Nope. In fact, the only improvements it has over the dire 64 version are scrolling pitches and improved droid sprites. On the opening screen 13 notes of sampled muzak play in an endless, soporific (whassat? – Ed) loop until you've selected your choice of game and waited a further two and a half minutes for the computer to generate the pitch. Why couldn't five three-screen pitches have been stored on disk instead? Not only that – accurate control of your droid is grudgingly difficult. It changes unexpectedly when you take possession of the ball – ridiculously confusing in such a fast-action game. Even worse, the pitch is almost frictionless – like negotiating hills and bumps on ball-bearings! The options listed in the instructions for changing the physics of the game would have helped but unfortunately they weren't included in the game. Just like the playability, in fact.



After the appalling 64 incarnation of this weak futuresport, I had slightly higher hopes for the Amiga version. Those hopes have been dashed. From the opening screen you know the game isn't going to win any awards for presentation. Missing pitch editing options, tedious music and lengthy pauses are irritating enough, but actually starting the game reveals worse. The droid control is, to put it mildly, difficult. As if trying to use two different control methods in close succession isn't difficult enough, the pitch appears to be made of glass; one bump from your boisterous opponent and you end up out of sight! After several games I'm almost sure I was close to mastering it but, just to spite me, the program crashed. Small mercies, eh?

PRESENTATION 39%
Very basic, and the options listed in the instructions didn't exist on our copy. Lengthy pauses are irritating.

GRAPHICS 70%
Smooth, effective pitches and solid droids give the whole thing a pleasing look.

SOUND 67%
Thump 'n' thud effects and a six second long title tune.

HOOKABILITY 41%
Long pauses are an immediate put-off and the control method demands much perseverance.

LASTABILITY 36%
Repetitive and annoying.

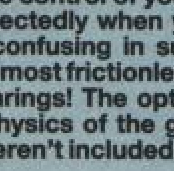
OVERALL 48%
Poor execution makes this an uncompelling futuresport game.

STREET GANG

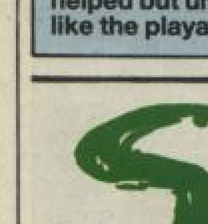
Players, £14.95 disk

Apparently, the 'in' thing to do in New York is join a gang of psychopathic thugs who enjoy dispensing physical violence to innocent passers-by. Mickey can only make friends if he wipes out the hoods who make up a rival gang, The Disciples, and takes out its leader, the notorious Curl.

Iron man Mickey can deliver quite a smack in the mouth and when duffed-up enemies drop their weapons, he can pick them up to use himself. Er, and that's it, really.

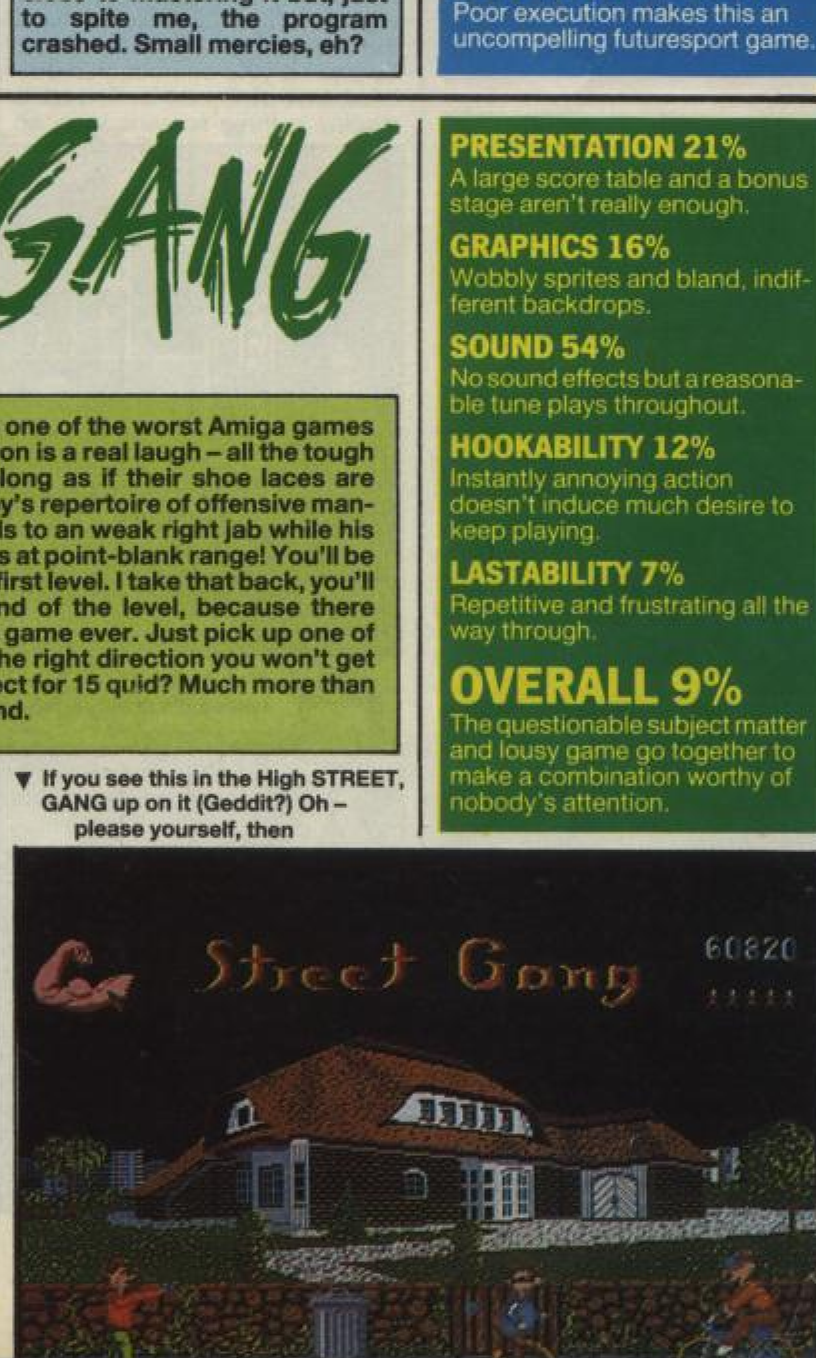


This must qualify as one of the worst Amiga games around! The animation is a real laugh – all the tough characters mince along as if their shoe laces are tied together! Mickey's repertoire of offensive manoeuvres only extends to an weak right jab while his adversaries fire guns and tear gas at point-blank range! You'll be lucky to make it to the end of the first level. I take that back, you'll be very unlucky to reach the end of the level, because there awaits the most pointless bonus game ever. Just pick up one of the dustbin lids: if the wind's in the right direction you won't get blown up! Well, what do you expect for 15 quid? Much more than this game could offer, I'll be bound.



I was expecting to see something impressive when I saw that this was a game from the creators of Great Giana Sisters, **but this is the worst Amiga game I've seen. The gameplay is sluggish and uninteresting, the sprites wibbly and the backgrounds boring. After struggling to reach the end of level one, being greeted by the most boring bonus level imaginable was not amusing. The blurb on the packaging suggests that life is 'dull and boring' until you join a street gang. This kind of phrase, coupled with the violent score table graphics directly promotes violence and is fairly unforgivable. I'd go so far as to say that** Street Gang **shouldn't be sold in its present form.**

▼ If you see this in the High STREET, GANG up on it (Geddit?) Oh – please yourself, then



PRESENTATION 21%
A large score table and a bonus stage aren't really enough.

GRAPHICS 16%
Wobbly sprites and bland, indifferent backdrops.

SOUND 54%
No sound effects but a reasonable tune plays throughout.

HOOKABILITY 12%
Instantly annoying action doesn't induce much desire to keep playing.

LASTABILITY 7%
Repetitive and frustrating all the way through.

OVERALL 9%
The questionable subject matter and lousy game go together to make a combination worthy of nobody's attention.


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THUNDERCATS

Elite, £24.99 disk

As everybody knows, the Thundercats, including Lion-o, fled their home planet of Thundera just before it was destroyed, and are travelling the stars in their lone spacecraft in search of a new home. They crash-land on the Third Earth only to be threatened by another peril: the Ever-Living Mumm-Ra has kidnapped Tygra, Panthro and Wilykit and stolen the Eye of Thundera, a magical gem set into the hilt of Lion-o's Sword of Omens. Lion-o has to fight his way through 14 horizontally scrolling levels to get them back.

Luckily, the Sword of Omens is still powerful enough to crack enemy skulls and break into supply boxes which hold blaster pistols and extra lives (phew!). A life is lost on contact with a mutant, by falling into one of the pits which lie between platforms, or failing to complete a level within the time limit.

As you approach Mumm-Ra's fortress, Castle Plundar, your aims of cat liberation are realised. Tygra is rescued on completion of level three, Panthro can be saved on level eight, and Wilykit on stage 13. The final level is a showdown between the leaders of good and evil, as you face the mighty Mumm-ra, who stands guard over the jewel. Destroy him, and the Thundercats return to their lair for a relaxing bowl of cream. Miaaaooowwwwww . . .



▲ Gun in hand, Lion-O fends off the attacks of the evil mutants in Elite's *Thundercats*



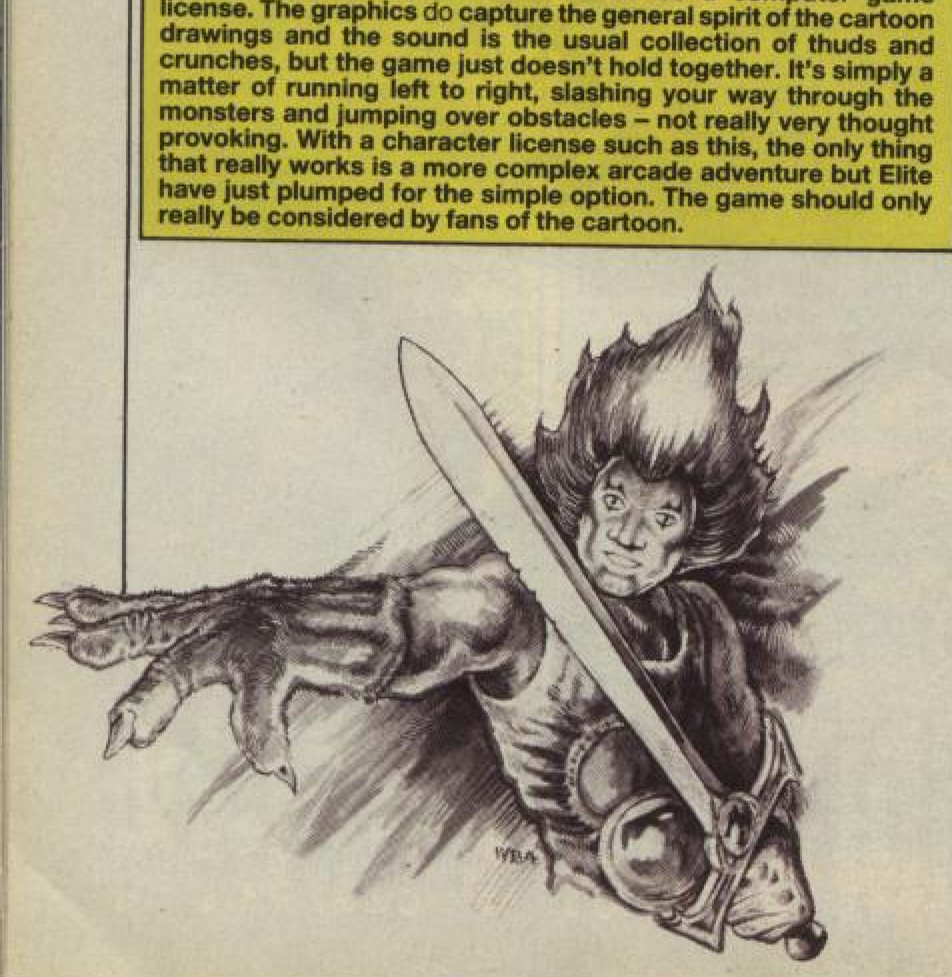
The gameplay in Thundercats **holds little over that of Martech's tedious** Vixen**. It's more or less the same type of walk right-crouch-fire procedure but, unlike** Vixen**, play is challenging because the weaker weapons (the Sword of Omens is particularly puny) make defending Lion-o against the oncoming hordes of mutants a tortuous test of reactions. The inclusion of rescue missions give the game the sense of purpose that** Vixen **lacks, but apart from these factors the game is unremarkable. After several trips as far as the end of level two, I found the whole thing growing more and more tedious. I'm sure that even rampant Lion-o groupies would want more from a** Thundercats **game than the short-lived thrill of seeing their heroes on the computer screen – this product wouldn't provide them with much beyond that.**



I don't know what all these kids see in the Thundercats **cartoon (Oi! – Ed). The plot and characters are ropey even for a five-year-old's programme. Well, that's neither here nor there; the characters are popular, so there has to be a computer game license. The graphics** do **capture the general spirit of the cartoon drawings and the sound is the usual collection of thuds and crunches, but the game just doesn't hold together. It's simply a matter of running left to right, slashing your way through the monsters and jumping over obstacles – not really very thought provoking. With a character license such as this, the only thing that really works is a more complex arcade adventure but Elite have just plumped for the simple option. The game should only really be considered by fans of the cartoon.**



It's a sad fact of life (sigh) that the production of most tie-ins is a matter of sticking aptly designed sprites into a sub-standard game format, such as a shoot 'em up or arcade adventure. Thundercats **is a particular disappointment as I'm a tad fond of the cartoon programme. The Lion-o sprite closely resembles his TV counterpart as he runs through the levels killing horrible mutants, but the visual effect is spoiled by few frames of character animation and bland scenery. I don't know what piece of music is supposed to be playing, but it certainly isn't the** Thundercats **theme tune: the jolly sound effects are both annoying and inappropriate to the game's subject matter. Neither of these things would matter if the gameplay was anything special, but it's simply a** Green Beret **variant with a couple of sword moves replacing the dagger – and only one type of pick-up weapon.** Thundercats **is a potentially interesting license wasted on a basic kill-and-run platform scroller.**



PRESENTATION 62%
High-res cartoon pictures to lead in to the action, but minimal options.

GRAPHICS 67%
Detailed and well coloured characters, but boring platform graphics and simple animation.

SOUND 58%
Anonymous title music and ill-chosen sound effects.

HOOKABILITY 72%
An action-packed romp, albeit a simple one.

LASTABILITY 66%
The safe return of your friends and the Eye of Thundera isn't necessarily worth the trouble.

OVERALL 68%
An unambitious *Green Beret* style game for a license with great possibilities.

BONUS ICONS



Letters form the word EXTRA for a bonus life.

Temporarily stops the monsters from moving.

Adds time to the clock.

Temporarily stops the clock.

Ends the level.

Allows you to hit any monster.

HELTER·SKELTER

Audiogenic, £14.95 disk

What do the words Helter Skelter mean to you? A spiral-shaped chute that you slide down on a mat? Well for the moment forget about that, because the game *Helter Skelter* has got nothing to do with slides or mats, but plenty to do with platforms and balls.

The game takes place in one of those well weird 'other dimensions' we're always hearing about. This time the strange environment is a collection of rooms littered with walls and platforms which you must bounce about on. Oh, by the way, the reason you're bouncing about is because you are a rubber ball (well, I did say it was weird) (Just like you, Maffy-babes – Ed.) Some rooms wrap around so that zooming off the edge of the screen places you on the opposite side. In these rooms are bunches of creatures, ranging from square-headed gonks to oversized blue crows.

Above the head of one of the creatures hangs a yellow arrow. This marks the thingy that needs to be bashed by you, thus removing it from the screen. If, however, you land on a monster not marked by an arrow, it splits into two smaller creatures (but they don't split any further than this), making more work for you. All the creatures must be killed in the correct order before the timer runs out, otherwise one of your lives is lost.

As well as being able to move left and right, you can hurl yourself at the floor to increase your bounce – but be careful, since every bounce decreases your bonus.

Occasionally an icon may appear on the screen, giving you a slight advantage. If you think that the screens are too hard then you can alter them to your own design.



Quite often, games gain acclaim just because they're a bit wacky, which makes reviewing this a bit dodgy. Helter Skelter **is a wacky sort of game, so I'm sceptical of giving it a high mark. But I've played it quite a bit now and it's starting to drive me up the wall! The control is a bit tricky at first since the ball seems to have quite a lot of momentum. It takes a while to start moving and even longer to stop. Once this has been overcome, you can really get into it. It's not the sort of game where you have just one more go, it's one of those games where you just keep playing and playing 'till you go bug-eyed! The password system means that you don't get too bored by having to play the lower levels all the time (but the high levels are *really* hard!) and the screen editor may extend its lastability. There's nothing else for it, it's got to be another highly acclaimed 'wacky' game!**



▲ Gulp! Captain Beaky's about to indulge in a spot of nasty GBH

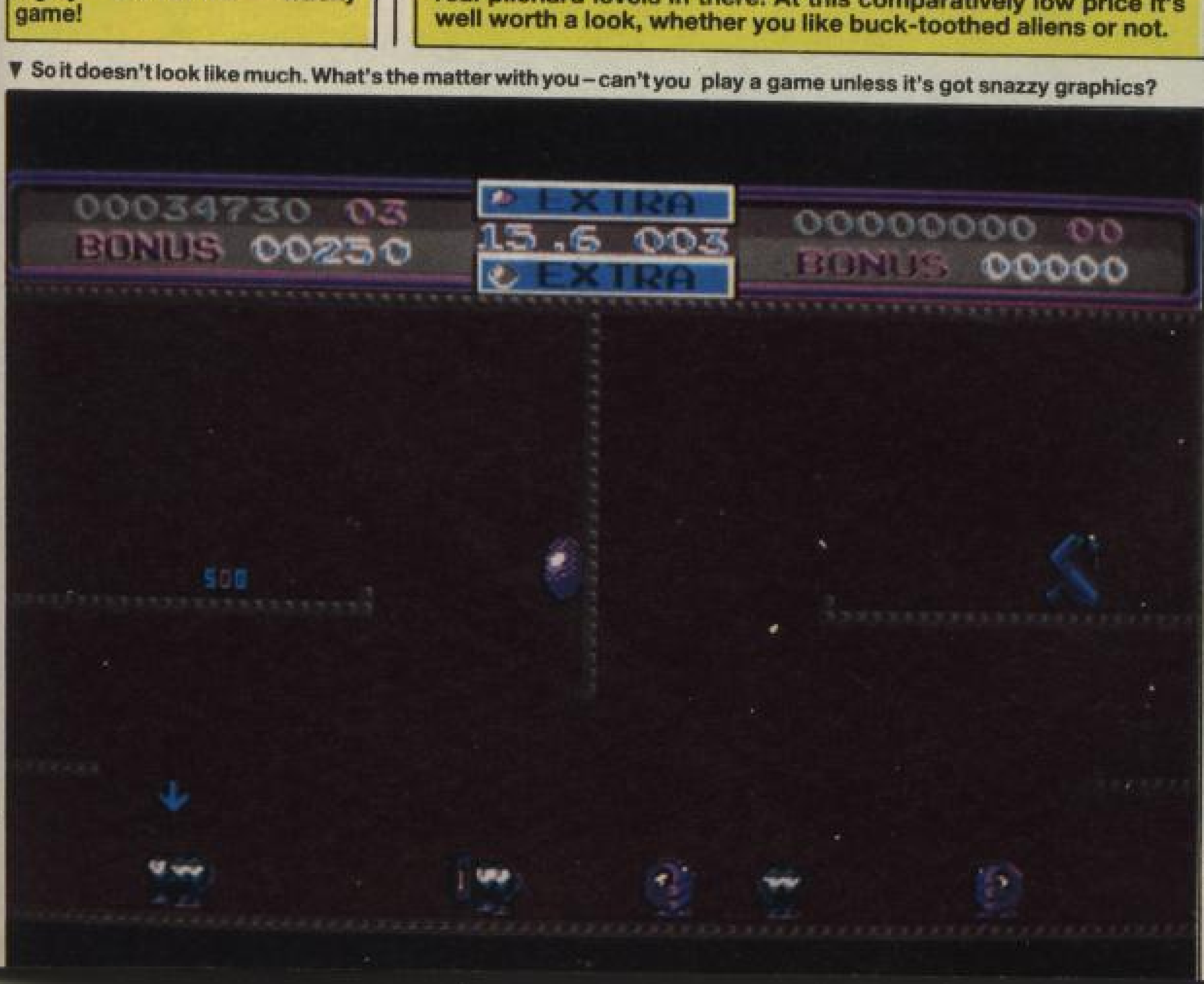


This is an unusual game in every respect, from the odd and basic sound effects to the gameplay itself. It's very cute, though, and I'm a real sucker for cutesy products (How to keep an idiot happy: give me a game of Bubble Bobble **or** Little Green Man **and I'm well content). All the creatures are neatly and imaginatively drawn, which makes you think that some of the simpler screen designs are going to be easy – don't be fooled! There are some real pilchard levels in there! At this comparatively low price it's well worth a look, whether you like buck-toothed aliens or not.**



Aaaaagh! Ngaaaah! Wyagggg! Right, I think that's worked off all the aggression half an hour of Helter Skelter **has just given rise to. And all because of an innocent little bouncy ball and a couple of evil-grinning potato heads – aah! Yeah, well, now I've picked my shredded nerve ends off the floor let's get on with the comment. The graphics aren't exactly the sort to take your breath away (have you been eating garlic again – Ed), the gameplay isn't overly astounding, but the package as a whole is more addictive than *Saturday Night Live* after sharing a pint of Barbican with PG down The Bull. For some reason that infuriating red ball never quite goes where you think it will! If you're expecting fancy presentation and over-the-top Amiga graphics, give this one a miss, but if all you're after is a good old-fashioned mega-addictive, well-hard game then get this – you can afford £14.95!**

▼ So it doesn't look like much. What's the matter with you – can't you play a game unless it's got snazzy graphics?



PRESENTATION 95%
Two player simultaneous action and a useful password system, as well as the screen editor.

GRAPHICS 81%
Cartoon-like sprites and colourful platforms.

SOUND 56%
Nice speech and some DX7 sounds (what's a DX7? Those who don't know should ask Maff).

HOOKABILITY 74%
The strange control is a tad difficult to handle.

LASTABILITY 89%
Lots and lots of levels to keep you occupied for a long time.

OVERALL 86%
A playable and enjoyable near-'budget' price platformer which should appeal to all fans of cutesy gaming.

Virus

Firebird, £19.95 disk

Flipping heck! Will those people from the planet next door never stop invading? This time around they aren't even bothering with all that 'Take me to your leader' rubbish, and have started their conquest by infecting the countryside with a virulent red bacterium. Unless you're prepared to do something about it, defoliation is the order of the day – a demoralising blow to the morale of the ecology-mad populace who will no doubt surrender to alien whims rather than watch their verdant planet wither.

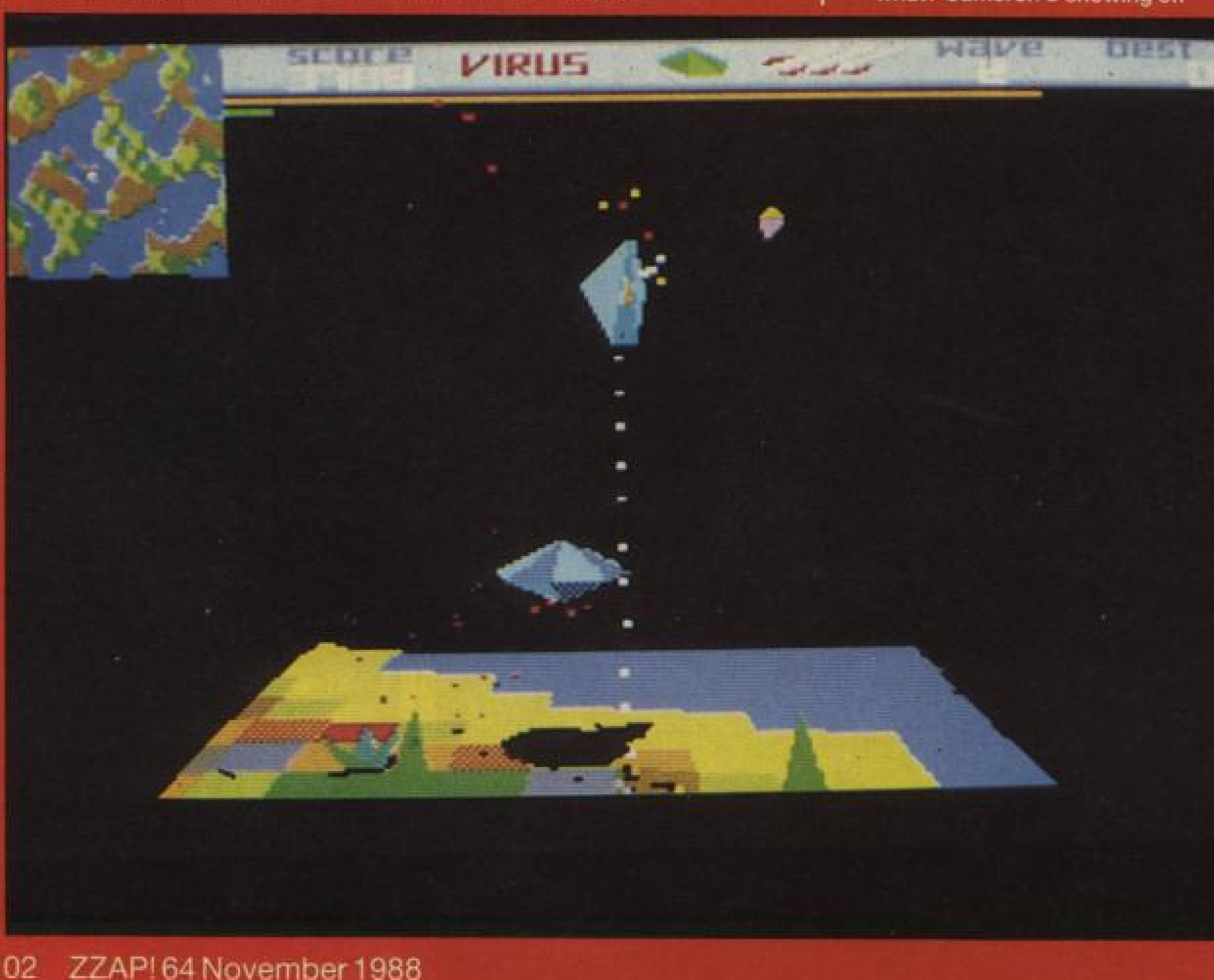


▲ Have *you* got what it takes to get into a dogfight like this *and* get out alive?



▲ Thrash the pants off the opposition – in the outer atmosphere

So, now would be a good time to climb into your hoverplane and show those greenies who's boss. The hoverplane is a highly manoeuvrable fighter aircraft, equipped with a protective energy shield, a long range scanner, a laser cannon and three homing missiles. Vertical and forward thrust is provided through a single downward-pointing exhaust in the hoverplane's base, so the craft handles rather like a helicopter – tilt the nose down and you fly forward. Also like a helicopter, your hoverplane can be rotated about a vertical axis, allowing it to turn smoothly or swing round on the spot.



▼ Woohoo? Is this fancy flying or what? Cameron's showing off



Virus' most attractive feature is undoubtedly the excellent 3D rendering of a solid environment, which even extends to exploding trees and leaping fish! It's a little surprising, then, that the technique wasn't bolted onto a game which was a little more involved. That's not to say that the game isn't a lot of fun as it stands, though – in fact, it's most exhilarating to swoop down over hills and oceans at enormous speeds and blast the hell out of anything blastable. The keyboard control method is by far the easier to use, as the mouse is so vague that you usually end up pitching and yawing when you only meant to pitch. The audio effects are disappointingly basic on the whole, and distant gunfire sounds like a DIY enthusiast with a hammer and I was often given the impression that there was someone falling down the ZZAP! Towers staircase. Any road up, I liked it loads, and I reckon anyone who fancies a new approach to the combat flight simulator should definitely check Virus **out.**

Your flight is viewed in three dimensions from a point outside the hoverplane, which skims over the undulating planet surface consisting of fish-filled oceans, patchworks of fields, trees and cottages.

To help determine where you are on the planet, the long range scanner gives a bird's eye view of the whole surface and plots the positions of your own, and alien craft with a coloured dot. The scanner receives signals from an array of ground-based antennae which, if destroyed by a stray shot, leave a blank space on the scanner display.

One capsule of the virus infects a whole field, and the extent of the infection is shown by discoloration on the scan display. If the virus infects a tree, it either withers it or causes it to mutate into a virus-spraying plant which further pollutes the land around it.

The infection is first spread by Seeders – blue, diamond-shaped craft which fly slowly, spraying virus capsules over the landscape. Seeders will sometimes land to give one area a really good dose and create plenty of mutant trees.

Unlike the Seeders, Drones are armed with laser guns which they use to attack surface features and the hoverplane. A Drone can turn itself into a more powerful Mutant by shooting a mutated tree while in range of its virus spray. Mutants are also out to destroy the hoverplane, and its faster firing



▲ Just think: all the people inside these houses will die, unless you stop the virus spreading – aaah!

rate and greater accuracy makes it a more dangerous foe than the Drone.

Even more lethal than the Mutants are Fighters, which have the same wantonly destructive instincts but an even higher rate of fire. Fighters are also equipped with a shield which means it takes two laser hits to destroy them.

Other alien craft only make an appearance on the game's later levels. Bombers enter the fray from the second level flying a fast, fixed course and dropping high density virus bombs on parachutes.



The first thing that strikes you about Virus **is the dead impressive 3D: you can spend hours just flying around, getting used to the controls, spiralling to great heights and pulling up just before you crash to the ground – before you even begin to think about the game. When you come down to the action, it's all very impressive – a bit like a modified 3D** Defender **– though it's sometimes a tad difficult to tell just** exactly **where you are in space. The sound effects could have been a lot better (they aren't much of an advance over the ST version), but they don't detract from what is a brilliantly innovative and extremely playable game. Be warned though – it's *very* tricky at first; and if you're to explore its rewarding depths, perseverance is the order of the day.**

▼ A tense and tortured moment – can you really get this deadly alien crash-diving into the ground?



The Attractor is the most dangerous of all the alien craft, but its appearances are mercifully seldom. As well as firing destructive lightning bolts at the ground, the Attractor is equipped with a tractor beam which it uses to pull the Hoverplane towards it, drawing off your fuel.

There are also rumours of a new alien spacecraft which may appear at any stage in the game, wielding a *secret weapon*! Ooooh!



I first saw this on the ST (not being at Newsfield when they borrowed that spotty great Archimedes) and was pretty impressed. If I hadn't seen Starglider 2 **or** Carrier Command **I'd still be very keen; however, the combination of fast, 3D action and a brilliant plot in both those games tends to overshadow this production. But don't let that worry you!** Virus **is one of the more impressive Amiga releases, its only fault being the lengthy amount of time required to acquire control over your hoverplane. Once this skill is acquired, you're well on your way to many hours of enjoyment: whether it's just flying around, blasting the hell out of anything that moves, or simply acting as a defender on patrol, this game's compelling. Firebird/Rainbird are coming out with some superb Amiga products these days, and this is just another to add to the list. Oh – and watch out for the sea monster!**

PRESENTATION 85%
Redefinable keyboard or mouse options and intelligent demo mode. Nice in-game touches, such as leaping fish and a sea monster.

GRAPHICS 90%
Fast and exhilarating 3D effect, with one or two outstanding details.

SOUND 53%
Sampled sound effects range from very good to pretty silly.

HOOKABILITY 83%
Controls take a little getting used to (particularly mouse), but Hoverplane manoeuvring becomes instinctive after a short while.

LASTABILITY 79%
Plenty of levels, but though the action is always challenging, it doesn't have a great deal of variety.

OVERALL 84%
An excellent and innovative game, but *Virus* is an acquired taste.

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... SPORT OF TOMORROW



Screen shots from Atari ST version.



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ZZAP! 64 DEF GUIDE TO...

SHOOT 'EM UPS

OK, OK, it's a one-off. I know we said we weren't going to do shmups as a Def guide, but public demand dictated otherwise. So here it is, for all you readers who wrote in – but no calls for a Def guide to platform games, because we just won't do one, OK? Good.

Desperate to stay awake over the long winter months? There's nothing better than a good shoot 'em up to keep the reactions taut, the senses keen and the adrenalin flowing. Join us on a trip through our top games from this massive genre which goes back to the dawn of logon time . . .

The shoot 'em up has long been one of the most popular game types amongst computer gamers who wanted to bring the excitement of the arcade into their own home. The genre has several branches to it, usually classification comes down to the way the action is displayed – single-screen, vertical-scrollers, horizontal-scrollers, and '3D' blasters – but the roots of all these lie in such seminal (sounds a bit ruuuuud) coin-ops as Space Invaders, Star Fire *(a fun but repetitive 3D space blast by Exidy), and the archetypal* Defender.

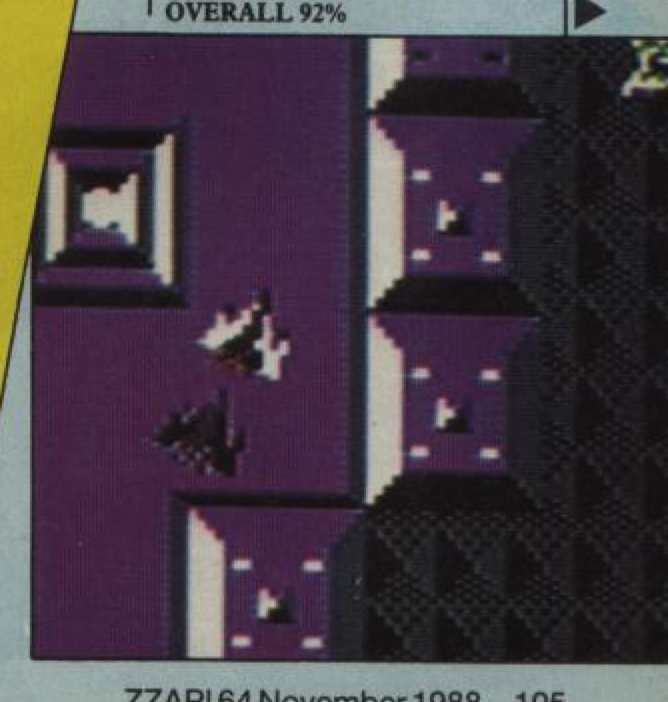
The Commodore 64, with its hardware scrolling, eight splittable sprites and excellent sound chip makes it a simple task for a good programmer to recreate the destructive fun of the arcades. Indeed, it is only since coin-op shoot 'em up licenses have become such an integral part of the gaming scene that the graphics and audio limitations of the machine have begun to peep through, and even then, only in a minority of poorly-programmed cases. With the right people showing it what to do, the good old 64 is still quite capable of bringing all the fun of the arcade shoot 'em up to the monitors of the masses, and we're sure it will continue to do so for some time to come.

In the meantime, let's have a look at the best blasters the Commodore has managed to accumulate in its six and a half year life span. The games we'll be scrutinising in this bumper round up are:

DELTA Thalamus
ZYNAPS Hewson,
SANXION Thalamus
DROPZONE US Gold
PASTFINDER Activision
WIZBALL Ocean
IRIDIS ALPHA Hewson
PARADROID Hewson
URIDIUM Hewson
LIGHT FORCE Faster Than Light
ENCOUNTER Novagen
CYBERNOID Hewson
I,BALL Silverbird
IO Firebird
ZYBEX Zeppelin
GUARDIAN Alligata
HUNTER'S MOON Thalamus
THRUST Silverbird
PARALLAX Ocean

All brilliant games we're sure you'll agree, but one had to be singled out for special accolade, and after much deliberation, and painful head scratching (Gordon had a pair of scissors in his hand at the time), we selected what we considered to be the most original and addictive shmup ever: the one and only . . . Wizball.

Sensible Software's first real success came with *Parallax*, also released by Ocean in the autumn of 1986. The shoot 'em up action takes place over five elevated planetary zones which scroll in all directions following the movement of the player's aircraft, the IBIS. When not blasting aliens into the middle of next week, computer infiltration is the player's main occupation, for the circuits of each level's Central Computer hold plans for a massed invasion of Earth. To access the main computer, the player must first obtain a password from the many subcomputers hidden in hangars around the level. Breaking into these computers requires security kards which are held by scientists who only relinquish their kards when drugged. What makes *Parallax* such a great game is its terrific implementation of a perfect blend of game types. Graphically it is lovely, with spectacular parallax scrolling, but sonically it is even better and there are frequent arguments in the ZZAP! office as to whether or not the music is the best heard on a 64. Not the mindless blast you might be looking for, but a terrific game nonetheless.
OVERALL 92%



WIZBALL

Ocean, £8.95 cassette, £12.95 disk



Undoubtedly Sensible Software's best game to date, *Wizball* just missed out on a Gold Medal back in ZZAP! Issue 27 – a fact that surprised many gamers (including several of the current ZZAP! team).

Play takes place in the eight weird and wonderful levels of Wizworld, a once beautiful planet drained of all its colour by the malevolent Zark. As an amiable wizard, the player attempts to bring colour back to the world by shooting and capturing floating paint droplets then mixing the collected primary colours to create each landscape's three target colours. However, also infesting each level are Zark's minions which are shot to release magic pearls, used to bolt extra firepower and gadgets onto the standard Wizball.

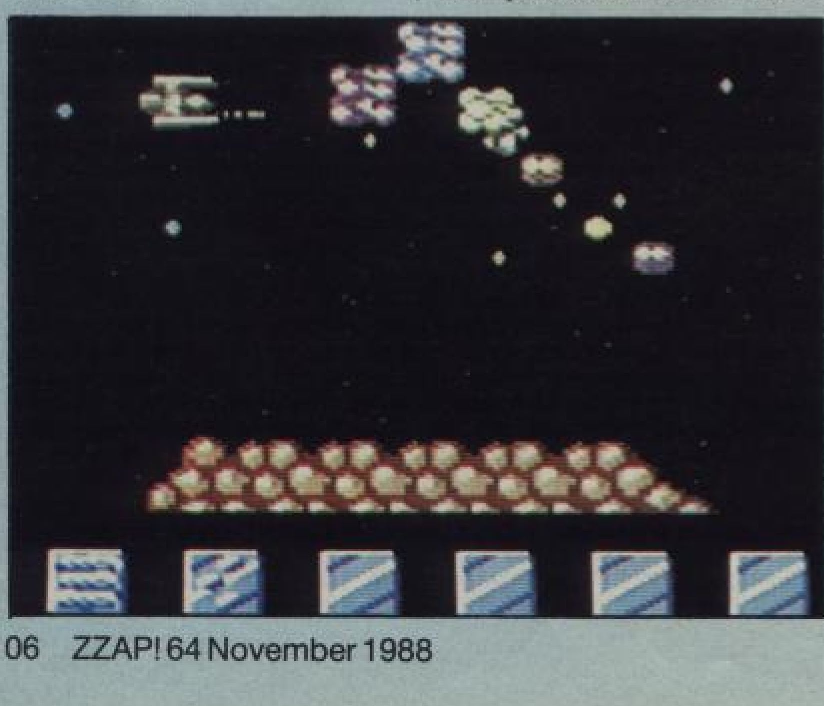
Most important of these is a mini Wizball carrying a cat (called Nifta), which, as well as being a sort of 'multiple' weapon, is used to catch paint droplets. Apart from the three primary colours, there are another five droplets to collect, some of which have detrimental effects on the player's progress, by making the scenery invisible, for example, or rendering the cat uncontrollable. Others bestow extra lives on the player or give the cat the ability to withstand 128 collisions rather than the usual nine.

(Paul) *Not to put too fine a point on it,* Wizball *is nothing short of being a work of mad genius! The amount of thought put into this game is exemplary, with a marvellous plot, so many neat control touches, terrifyingly addictive play, beautiful graphic design and some of the best music you'll ever hear from a Commodore. Apart from the addition of more levels, there are no improvements which could be made to this game – everything you could possibly want from a piece of computer entertainment is in there and nothing has been compromised. I don't know how it missed out on a Gold Medal back in Issue 27, but hopefully the DEF award will go some way to reconciling that small misdemeanor.*

(Gordon) *There's not much I can add to that: for me, it's a toss up between this and* Dropzone, *with this winning by virtue of its originality. The only fault I found with it was the initial difficulty, but the subsequent gameplay makes up for that by about a millionfold. It's crammed with cute touches (not something you normally find in a shoot 'em up) and is almost totally unique. I've played it and completed it, and I still play it – if you ever see it lying around, snap it up, because it's not only the best shoot 'em up around, it's one of the best games of all time.*

OVERALL 98%

Thalamus put together the talents of Stavros Fasoulas, Bob Stevenson and Rob Hubbard and the result, *Delta*, was received to much acclaim back in the spring of 1987. The game is one of the many *Nemesis* clones which were to spring up, riding on the popularity of the arcade game, but *Delta*'s superb sprites and landscapes, and its glorious soundtracks make it something extra special. At the time of its release there were some misgivings about the game's playability, due to success having a heavy reliance on pattern learning, but this proves not to detract much from the game's appeal, and *Delta* was, and still is, the cause of many long and sleepless nights among members of the ZZAP! team who are desperate just to see the next level.
OVERALL 92%



Thalamus' first game, *Sanxion*, was a horizontal scroller too, this time with ten levels of Earthbound action. As a member of the Sanxion defence corps, the player fights off screen after screen of invading alien forces using only the standard weaponry of a laser cannon. Each level is rounded off with the destruction of a mother ship, then the player progresses to a ReGen station where bonus points are collected against a time limit by catching, dodging or destroying drone ships. After finishing the first ten levels, the player can move on to the more demanding night missions.

This was released before the 'extra weapons' bug really hit the Commodore games scene and *Sanxion*'s playability suffers slightly in comparison with that of the newer breed of shoot 'em ups which boast a large and varied armoury. Luckily, this deficiency is only a minor one, and is compensated for by *Sanxion*'s design, speed, silky smooth graphics, and excellent Rob Hubbard soundtracks. If a fast and uncluttered blast is what you're after, you could do far worse than this.
OVERALL 84%

Now one of the worthy inmates on Hewson's *Four Smash Hits* compilation, *Zynaps* made its first appearance in September, 1987. This is another of the horizontally-scrolling progressive-weaponry breed which has the player dispensing death to twelve levels packed with alien types and their motherships. *Zynaps* has fast action and lovely graphics going for it, as well as a nicely implemented armoury of weapons and an ergonomic method of selection for once. Counting against the game is its excessive difficulty level which, coupled with the player being sent back to the start of the level every time he dies, makes *Zynaps* rather too frustrating to be very addictive.
OVERALL 80%

Hewson's *Paradroid* was Andrew Braybrook's first game to really cause a stir on the Commodore scene and is still hailed by many as a classic. In it, the player takes control of an 'influence device' which has been transported into one of a fleet of space Dreadnoughts, the crews of which which have been overrun by their servant robots, now under the control of an alien force. Play takes place on the decks of the dreadnoughts which are viewed from above, with the screen scrolling in all directions to keep the influence device central. Initially, the player is equipped with the minimum of facilities – a small laser and the ability to fly – but by running into other androids, the influence device can attempt to take control of their weapons and means of motivation via a sub-game of circuit capture.

Paradroid is very much a thinking man's shoot 'em up, and provides an extensive challenge for even the most accomplished gamer. Look out for the speeded-up Competition edition which was released on a double pack with a souped-up version of *Uridium*, speaking of which . . .
OVERALL 95%

Braybrook's follow-up to *Paradroid* took the action to the outer surface of the Dreadnoughts, placing the player in a small and highly-manouevrable spacecraft pitted against squadrons of alien fighters. Play consists of destroying hostile ships while avoiding the many upright obstacles which clutter the bi-directionally scrolling surface of each Dreadnought until a klaxon sounds. The player can then land his ship on a landing strip at one end of the Dreadnought, and initiate its self-destruct sequence (gaining bonus points). After a spectacular disintegrating ship effect, play progresses to the next level where a ship with a different deck layout must be conquered.

Uridium lacked the depth of *Paradroid*, and though it's easy to get hooked on the fast shooting action, after a while play becomes monotonous and formulaic. The re-



released Uridium+, now featuring on compilations, only had extra levels to entertain the player, but mindless blasters should find this satisfactory for a while.
OVERALL 74%

Hewson and Llamasoft joined forces to bring 64 owners Jeff Minter's *Iridis Alpha*, a game of surreal blasting over the two opposing surfaces of the planet Iridis. The besieged planet is having its energy tapped away by belligerent Zzyaxians, and the only way the planet's inhabitants can combat the invaders is with a squadron of walk-or-fly Gilby Robot Fighters. The screen in *IA* is split horizontally to show two doppelganger Gilbies on opposing sides of the planet. Play can be switched between them to eliminate Zzyaxians on both sides of the planet and in so doing, accumulate energy, the level of which is shown by the Gilby's colour. Finishing each level requires a planetary core to be filled with energy collected by the Gilby.
The only detraction to this game is a product of the typical Minter outlandishness. However, once you get over the confusion compounded by high speed play (which moves in two directions at once) and the complications of entropy levels, *Iridis Alpha* is an enjoyable and exhilarating blast, definitely one worth looking out for.
OVERALL 87%

The flick-screen blaster, *Cybernoid* created quite a stir with its smart graphics and tremendous sounds earlier this year. You take the controls of the Cybernoid craft, sent to retrieve the riches of the Federation which have been stolen by a gang of space pirates. Clouds of laser fire are essential to coerce the pirates into giving up their booty, though you have a limited supply of missiles and shields which do the job equally well. Another very challenging and very addictive shoot 'em up, made even more attractive by its aesthetics and suitably ass-kicking weapons – absolutely essential when faced with mobs of such blood-thirsty space bandits. Check it out.
OVERALL 90%

After being programmed by Archer Maclean for Arena Graphics, then being released by US Gold, *Dropzone* eventually found its way onto the Americana budget label. The game is more or less a clone of the Williams arcade classic *Stargate*, a fast bi-directional horizontally-scrolling game with a look of *Defender*. Donning his jet-pack and rapid fire laser weapon, the player goes on patrol in the skies of the Jovian moon, Io, on the look out for a number of stranded scientists. Swarms of aliens are also after the scientists, dropping androids to assassinate them while others seed space with bombs to kill the heroic jetman. Fortunately for him, the jetman is equipped with a number of smart bombs and a cloaking device which can be used to defend his person and his charges in heated moments.
The first thing that strikes you about *Dropzone* is that play takes place at very high speed, making it highly reminiscent of the cult Williams games in which success depends heavily on large supplies of luck as well as skill. The exhilaration experienced during play is terrific and the game is superbly addictive. Without doubt, a classic example of the genre which should be hunted down and played until the tape wears out and you have to buy a new one.
OVERALL 97%

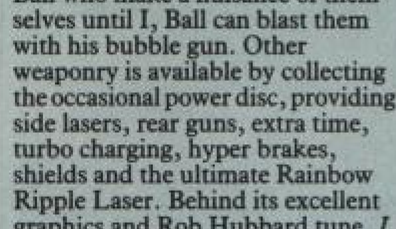
Novagen's ageing *Encounter* is a version of the arcade hit *Battlezone* which avoids the potential slowness of Commodore vector graphics by instead using speedy character sprites to display large flying saucers and enormous spherical shots whizzing in and out of the screen. Gameplay is simple – you drive a tank around a plain cluttered with



large black towers, using a radar scanner to find and destroy a quota of aliens who are just as eager to destroy you. Once the level's alien quota has been filled, a warp gate opens to take the player to the next level. While warping, you must guide the tank between an onrushing barrage of spheres which threaten to send you back to the previous level with one less shield. For its time, *Encounter* was something of a marvel, and even today, fast, addictive and thoroughly satisfying blasting action make it something of a favourite in the ZZAP! office.
OVERALL 82%

Take a trip into the world of the Balls, in *I, Ball* and take the role (roll?) of a spherical hero who has taken it upon himself to rescue four of his rotund chums from the vile Terry Ball. Play takes place against the clock on up and down scrolling levels littered with obstacles and electrified objects which give I, Ball a nasty puncture. Similarly dangerous are the assorted peons of Terry Ball who make a nuisance of themselves until I, Ball can blast them with his bubble gun. Other weaponry is available by collecting the occasional power disc, providing side lasers, rear guns, extra time, turbo charging, hyper brakes, shields and the ultimate Rainbow Ripple Laser. Behind its excellent graphics and Rob Hubbard tune, *I, Ball* is a very simple game, and though there is always the challenge to collect the extra weapons, once you are fully equipped, you're pretty much invincible. The only difficulties you are really faced with then are caused by running into electrified obstacles because of the over-keen inertia on the control. Otherwise, the game is well done and definitely worth the budget price tag.
OVERALL 81%

A variation on the vector graphics arcade game *Gravitar*, *Thrust* places the player in a small delta-wing ship with a mission to destroy enemy planetoids by destroying a reactor, then making off with a spherical Klystron pod. Since installations are usually built into caves which reach inside the planetoids, some fancy



flying is required from your ship, which can rotate clockwise and anti-clockwise, thrust and fire bullets. The ship is also equipped with a protective force field which can be used to double up as a tractor beam to draw fuel from ground-based tanks and lift Klystron pods from their pedestals. The player has to manipulate the controls with care to prevent the (almost) free-floating pod from going into a spin which renders both it and the ship completely out of control. This makes dextral play essential and progress through the many mazes of caverns is great fun and requires great skill and thought. Advanced players can pit their wits against reverse gravity and even invisible caves, and believe us, the incentive to get that far is very strong.
OVERALL 91%

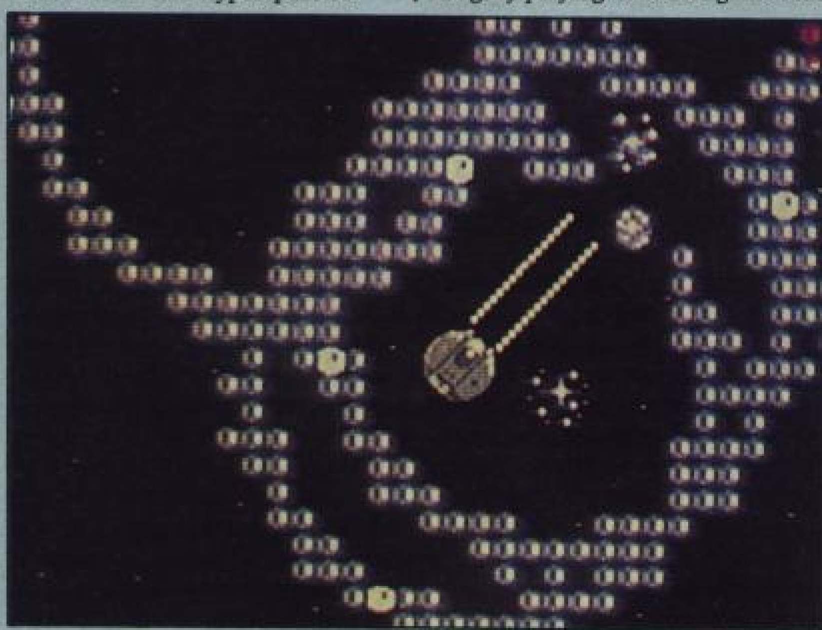
Firebird's *Io* is a product of Bob Stevenson and Doug Hare's *Kinetic Designs* and as you would expect, scores highly on graphics and technical accomplishment. It places the player in a ship traversing four horizontally-scrolling astral landscapes populated with all manner of alien ships, laser emplacements and missile silos to dispose of. Extra weaponry is available when certain hostiles are shot to leave a glowing green pod. This can either be captured for use as a smart bomb or shot again to transform it into a faster laser or a wing-tip gun pod. Use of these is essential as play progresses and the player comes across giant caterpillars made of spheres, and huge and spectacular end of level aliens. The graphic depiction of aliens, landscapes and even their bullets is nothing short of superb, but gameplay is excessively difficult, and so crossing the same landscape over and over again when the end of the game seems to be in sight, is discouraging, and frustration is more likely to keep you playing than unbridled enjoyment. Worth a look if you're the sort of cocky sonovagun who takes *Dropzone* to pieces without breaking into a sweat.
OVERALL 78%

Zybex heralded the launch of a new budget label, Zeppelin, and it certainly got the newcomers off to a good start. Very much in the vein of the arcade game *Side Arms*, the game allows one or two players to take off in their jet suits over 16 right-to-left scrolling levels, unleashing five types of electric death upon the oncoming hordes of alien types. Shooting the malcontents releases weapon icons which give our heroes bullet guns, eight way shots, pulse weapons, force walls and rail guns, and the strength of each can be increased up to four times by collecting the same icon repeatedly. Graphics throughout the game are beautifully designed, particularly the backdrops the effect of which is stunning on later levels. Helpfully, firing is automatic, with the fire button only being used to switch between weapons. Such features help to endear the player to the game almost immediately and when you consider this has a £2.99 price tag, it becomes an even more tempting buy.
OVERALL 89%

The Steve Evans oldie, *Guardian* is difficult to get hold of these days, though it does appear on an Alligata twin pack with another Evans classic *Eagle Empire* at a very low price. The game is an almost exact clone of the arcade *Defender*. All the usual features are in there – smooth two-way scrolling, the radar scan, the humanoids, the malicious kidnapping aliens. Anyway, suffice it to say that if you were one of the ones who played the original so much that it left you with a nervous tic, you'd ▶

better get hold of this and a good supply of tranquilizers.
OVERALL 87%

One of the greatest injustices of recent times is that *Hunter's Moon* (Thalamus) didn't receive the sales it deserved. Programmed by ZZAP! diarist Martin Walker, the game puts the player at the controls of the starship, *Hunter* which finds itself on the wrong side of the galaxy, an unfortunate consequence of flying too close to a black hole. Of course, getting back to the right side of the galaxy is the game's objective, but to do that the player has to negotiate an entire system of alien cellular growths, which is divided into several multi-directionally scrolling levels. Once four hyperspace co-



ordinates have been found, play can move onto the next level. Between each level, the player takes part in a bonus game in which the *Hunter* has to fight off a bombardment of spores from approaching worker cells.

Playing *Hunter's Moon* is an extraordinary visual and aural experience. The cellular formations seem almost too beautiful to destroy, and some of the effects border on the psychedelic. The title music is superb, but the in-game sound effects are more remarkable, making extensive use of pseudo-speech noises. The player has as many options as he could wish for, and the game even allows a choice of ship colour, and a range of three different engine types which effectively alters the control method. All these and compulsive blasting gameplay make *Hunter's Moon* a treat for the senses and the adrenal glands.
OVERALL 96%

Reviewed back in the salad days of ZZAP! (Issue 1 to be precise), Activision's *Pastfinder* was rewarded for its unusual but successful mix of arcade blasting and strategic gameplay. Set in about 6,000 years' time, the game puts the player at the controls of a Leeper craft which has as its means of locomotion a set of four spindly legs which allow it to walk at varying speeds and jump over obstacles on the vertically scrolling landscape. Each level is but a small section of a large, irradiated landscape throughout which are scattered hostile mutants which can be shot with a laser weapon, 'artifacts' which yield bonus points, and extra lives or defensive equipment. Available equipment includes heavy metal shields and deradiators to combat the high radiation levels in certain areas of the landscape, a beam shield to protect the Leeper from enemy fire, and a scrambler to prevent the enemy from detecting and tracking the Leeper. The object of *Pastfinder* is to explore the whole landscape, collect artifacts and deliver them to bases where the player is rewarded with bonus points or limited immunity to radiation.

Although by today's standards, *Pastfinder* hasn't much to offer on the graphics or sound fronts, it still scores very highly on playability. Gameplay is strikingly 'different' but this adds to the fascination, and there is certainly plenty to maintain the initially high interest level – fortunate, as the game's more subtle touches only come to light after lengthy playing. Another game that isn't in great abundance these days, but a prolonged search amongst the budget bins may well prove fruitful.
OVERALL 91%

Being an unrestrained blast, FTL's *Light Force* found instant favour with the ZZAP! team back in Issue 22. In it you take it upon yourself to rid the distant Regulus colony of rancid aliens and their associated surface structures. There is little to the game apart from pumping the fire button to launch laser bolts up the vertically-scrolling screen, but what is there is well presented, fast and addictive. The graphical representation of aliens and landscape is excellent and *Lightforce* sports a superb Rob Hubbard soundtrack which adds to the freneticism of blasting. The main drawback is the game's lack of levels – there are only four – and once they've been mastered the game begins again with difficulty level only slightly increased, so it should be easy to continue playing indefinitely once you're accustomed to the alien attack patterns.
OVERALL 77%



DEF TOP 10

1 WIZBALL
Ocean
2 DROPZONE
US Gold
3 HUNTER'S MOON
Thalamus
4 PARADROID
Hewson
5 DELTA
Thalamus
6 PARALLAX
Ocean
7 THRUST
Silverbird
8 PASTFINDER
Activision
9 CYBERNOID
Hewson
10 ZYBEX
Zeppelin Games

So there you have it. Bullshit. The ten best shoot 'em ups the Commodore has ever seen – or rather, the ten best shoot 'em ups we've seen on the Commodore.

By looking at the best features of our top ten, it's clear that there are three factors essential to the perfect shoot 'em up. The action has to get the adrenal glands working overtime by making heavy demands on the your ability to think fast, and move the joystick even faster. Exhilaration is the name of the game, and this only comes by repeatedly putting you in the tightest of spots and giving you the opportunity to escape with the skin of your teeth barely intact. The best shoot 'em ups will leave you either screaming or sweating (or both).

Equally important is variety. How long would you be able to play the original arcade Space Invaders *for these days? Not very long? That's because the action only changes in its level of difficulty, and the player isn't really offered any new challenges – just stay alive and keep accumulating points. Nowadays, a good shoot 'em up needs either graphic variation (changes of scenery or alien types) or at least attack patterns.*

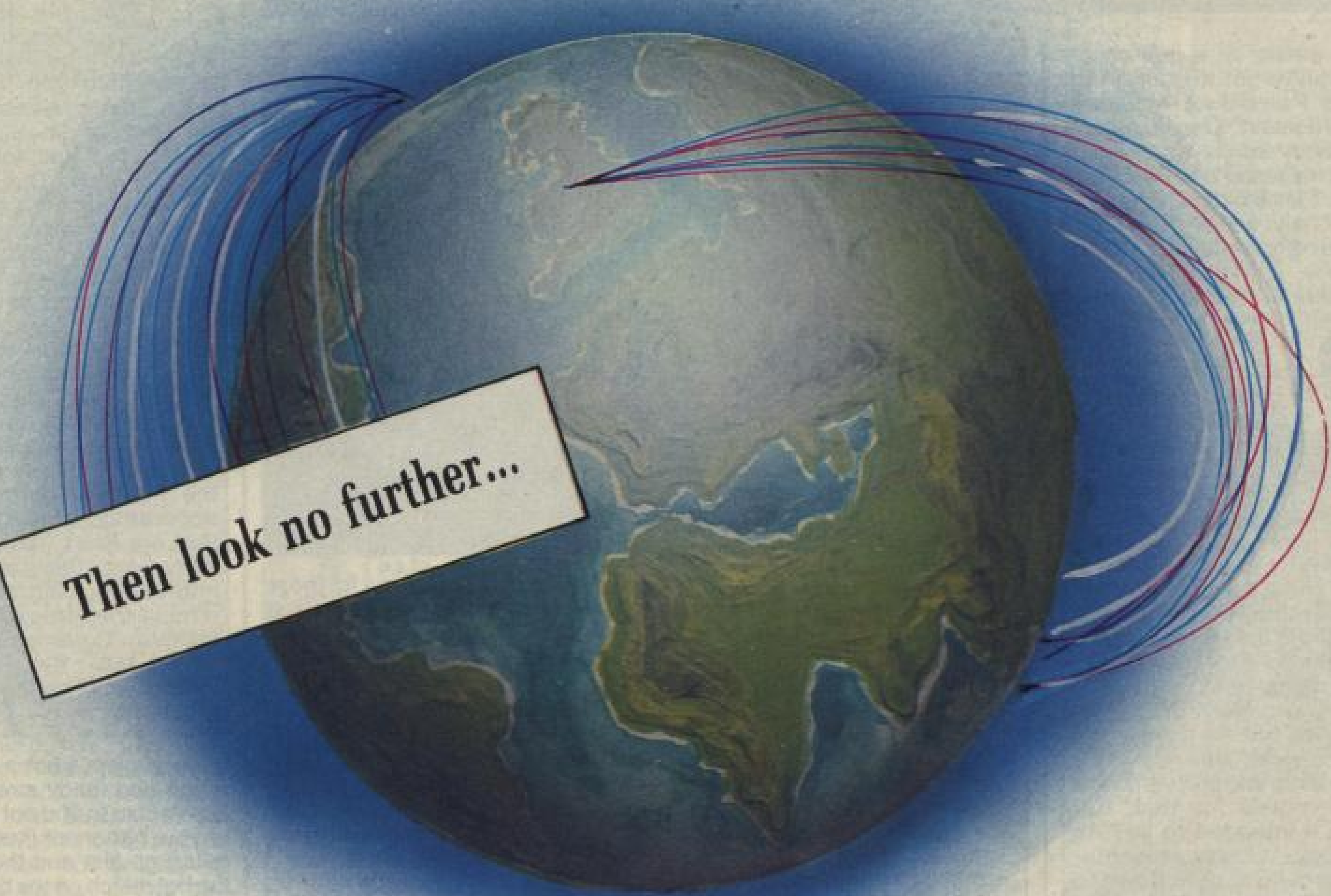
Take the example of Delta. *The variety and beauty of the backdrops and aliens has the player coming back for more with the belief that the next level can't* possibly *look better. The alien blasting levels are also interspersed with column dodging and asteroid blasting levels which also help to dispel those feelings of monotony.*

But where would a shoot 'em up be without its weapons? As the producers of such arcade games as Nemesis *and* Side Arms *discovered a few years ago, you get more satisfaction from blasting aliens with some kind of pretty* hard *armament, so pea-shooter lasers are out. However, it is excusable to have a reasonably puny weapon at the start of play if it can be used to easily obtain loads of types of bolt-on megaweapon later in the game. It is important that the limitations of the game don't hold back the aggressive urges of the player, and from all the shoot 'em ups we've seen, be they home micro or arcade, we decided the most desirable death-dealing extras to be made available are probably as follows:*

1. Increased shot speed – *allowing only a single shot on the screen at once can lead to frustrating deaths.*
2. Multi-directional fire – *three-way then eight-way is usually a good level of progression, and multiple firing saves the player from putting himself in untenable positions.*
3. At least one drone ship which emulates the main craft's firing and remains indestructible – *useful as a shield or just for meting out fiery justice to whole hordes of enemies at once.*
4. Homing missiles or bombs – *maximum devastation ensured.*
5. Unstoppable weapons – *ripple lasers or beam weapons à la* R-Type *are graphically impressive and profitably deadly for whole ranks of hostiles.*

These provide the feeling of supreme power essential to the whole shoot 'em up philosophy. Such games are (we're led to believe) helpful to the release of the animal aggression we all have as a legacy from our prehistoric ancestors, which is kept pent-up during our daily lives. Blasting cathode-ray robots is a far more acceptable alternative to real-life destruction, though some would argue that one leads to the other. What do you think?

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If you wanna be a real soccer star, you've got to start on the streets. Pelé did . . . Maradona did . . . Johann Cruyff did . . . Paul Glancey didn't – which is why Pelé is a megastar and Paul Glancey isn't. Funny old game, innit?

Right, now we've established you're going to be famous, let's do it properly, shall we? First: the pitch – there's the soft and slippery turf of the park (watch out for those little canine calling cards) or just the plain old, ordinary backstreet.

Second: the team. You can pick three players from a selection of rough and ready streetwise kids. Spin a coin to find out whether you or your opponent (human or computer) go first and the most Epyx (ho ho) match on the block is ready to begin.

Pressing the joystick button toggles between members of the team. In addition to basic passing, receiving, shooting and kicking, you can play a variety of fancy 'set shots' and block an offensive player.

Fouls result in a penalty shot and offsides (an offensive player without the ball gets behind a defensive player) mean automatic change of possession.

Matches are played over a set time limit or until one team achieves a preset winning score.



Back where I come from in't Lancashire wilds, backstreet football could lead to some pretty nasty arguments – but it wasn't exactly played according to the rules. Much t'same could be said (though not necessarily in that accent) about Street Sports Soccer: it's good fun to play (especially with a friend – well, with Maff, anyway) and even better to argue over, but it's not really a proper sports sim – there's just not a big enough variety of tactical moves for that. But then, is it intended to be? As usual, Epyx' classy presentation is excellent, right down to the spinning coin that decides who starts the match. If you're not bothered about an incredibly faithful soccer sim, get out your boots and give this one a whirl: I think it's fab.





'Ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go,etc. Geordie aggro, Geordie aggro (Oi! – PG). I'm just trying to work up the right frenzy for another game of Street Sports Soccer. This time I'm going to beat that fatso Gordo into the ground, if it's the last thing I do! Meanwhile – back to the comment. First off – this is not a very serious football sim and you don't need to memorise a whole range of complicated moves to play. And that's exactly why I think it's great: if you can't go down to the park with a group of friends the next best thing is staying in with your computer to bash the ball about. You don't need any special knowledge or skills – just get in there and beat the hell out of them. Almost like the real thing . . . But then, being a girly, what would I know about that?



These past couple of months have seen there fair share of footy simulations. They seem to be popping up everywhere you look! I suppose Epyx's release is more to go with their Street Sports series, not just following the rush of World Cup influenced games. This isn't a bad game at all as a matter of fact, but I must say that after Baseball I did expect something more than a watered down International Soccer-type game. The sprites are a bit on the small side – and a bit chunky come to think of it. The backdrops are a fair enough representation of a street and a park, but wouldn't a couple of coats on the floor be better than the apparently well made goals that are there instead? Playability-wise, the game is quite interesting, capturing a good deal of the atmosphere of the kickabout games I used to play, but the variety is definitely below the usual Epyx standard.

▼ 'Gimme that ball or I'll kick yer 'ead in!' is only one of the many uncultured phrases heard in ZZAP! this month



PRESENTATION 76%
Multiload may annoy cassette users. Otherwise – a wide range of options including team selection and three difficulty levels.

GRAPHICS 75%
Bright and bold but the players still suffer a bit from 'the chunks'.

SOUND 53%
Unoriginal front-end tune complemented by sparse in-game spot effects.

HOOKABILITY 78%
You've just got to beat your mates.

LASTABILITY 70%
Lack of tactical variety may dull your original enthusiasm slightly.

OVERALL 75%
Just as much fun as kicking a ball about in your back garden – and you can't break your neighbour's windows (aaah! Takes all the fun out of it! – Ed.)

SINBAD AND THE THRONE OF THE FALCON

Mirrorsoft, £14.99 disk only

Our macho Middle Eastern hero, Sinbad, has received a desperate plea from his childhood sweetheart, the Princess Sylphani. To weaken the throne of Damaron, the Black Prince Camaral has transformed her father, the Caliph, into a falcon (nasty trick, huh?) And – wouldn't you just know it? – Sinbad's got to change him back . . .

In a mere few months, our swarthy chum must search the many cities of the surrounding continents for the help of four main characters.

Libitina is a sorceress with eyes for Sinbad. Information is difficult to gain from her, but she can give Sinbad strength if he is willing to put himself under her spell; Iris the Gypsy is a wise old woman whose information is invaluable; finding a Genie's bottle grants you three wishes which could save the day when disaster strikes. The Shaman is the most vital of the four, as only he knows how to release the Caliph from the Black Prince's spell. To converse, pick one of three sentences for Sinbad to speak, being careful not to say anything which could offend.

Your quest also takes you through several arcade style games. Use a crossbow to shoot down the treacherous Pteranoxos before it can relay your position to the Black Prince. Jump between underground platforms and avoid falling rocks when Camaral's magic causes an earthquake. Kill the boulder-hurling Cyclops with only a make-shift sling. Steer your ship, the Sabaralus, around reefs to save drowning sailors. Pick the jewels out of the eyes of magical statues. Cross swords with some of the most dangerous brigands in the land. Blast the alien hordes with your plasma disruptor cannon. Er, no, well, that's one thing the game doesn't let you do . . .



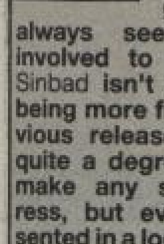
▲ A birdseye view (well almost) of our hero's finger – fresh from the captain's table



It's been a long time coming, but this Cinemaware **release seems to have even more to it than** Defender of the Crown! **All the magic and adventure of the Sinbad films is there except for Ray Harryhausen's monsters! The character graphics are excellent, as are the those in the action sequences, and sound is used equally well, with an extensive medley of Arabian soundtracks backing the action. The cost of all this is quite a bit of disk flipping, which isn't too bad at first, but after several games it becomes rather tiresome. The game's other weak point lies in the menu-driven conversations, which tend to repeat sentences illogically and sometimes the characters get some pretty tacky lines. But it was action, not dialogue, that made the movies so watchable, and this game certainly has plenty of that!**



I love all those old Sinbad films – you know, the ones with the six-headed monsters and really awful special effects – and Mirrorsoft have really recreated all that great nostalgic tackiness. Sinbad looks just like Clark Gable when he swings athletically from ledge to ledge – you can almost see the hairs on his chest! Obviously there are limitations to the kind of conversations you can have with people but somehow the game's complexity makes up for that. I wish they'd given you a few more lives for the arcade sections, though: it's really annoying when you get zapped by a spider or fall down a hole 20 minutes into a quest. Still – the mark of every hero is the ability to grin and bear his (or her) troubles. Go on then, say cheese!



I've never actually been that impressed with Cinemaware games. They always seem to be too involved to be entertaining. Sinbad **isn't too bad though, being more film-like than previous releases. It still takes quite a degree of thought to make any significant progress, but everything is presented in a logical and obvious way. The conversational sections are well depicted with large, well drawn and animated characters giving credibility to the given phrases. The only thing that really annoys me is the difficulty of the subterranean sequence, where Sinbad must escape to the surface after falling down a crack in the ground. One slip means that you fall all the way down to the bottom again. Aargh! Maybe I'm too much of a divvy to understand the game fully, but I still think it's quite good.**

▼ You could almost mistake him for Douglas Fairbanks (well *we* could, anyway)



PRESENTATION 90%
Film-style presentation throughout, and an easy to use icon command selection.

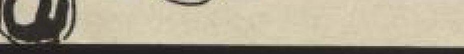
GRAPHICS 90%
Excellent static screens and smoothly-animated sprites.

SOUND 77%
Appropriate Middle Eastern incidental music.

HOOKABILITY 82%
Lovely aesthetics and the promise of varied gameplay are attractions.

LASTABILITY 76%
Plenty of action, but entry into some subsections seems too random, so the atmosphere isn't as good as it should be.

OVERALL 80%
Very good, action-packed adventure with plenty to keep you occupied.



INTENSITY

Firebird, £9.95 cassette, £12.95 disk

The Terran Exploration Company operatives, whose job it is 'to seek out new life and new civilisations' have come across just what they were looking for. Unfortunately, the new life form they have discovered is a genus of hostile mutant which finds that the best way to while away the solar hours is to infest visiting space stations and beat up defenceless colonists.

Under such circumstances, the crew of the Canis Major space station have decided that evacuation is their only hope, and it's up to you to get them from the platforms where they work to any one of five escape shuttles at the far end of the station.

The colonists emerge from the Canis Major's airlocks, then run across the deck towards their rescue vehicle, a drone ship which is under the control of your surface skimmer. Picking up colonists is simply a matter of flying the surface skimmer from its launch pad to a clear site near an airlock and calling the drone. When the skimmer launch pad flashes, that platform's quota of colonists has been rescued, so landing the skimmer back on its pad moves you to one of three other decks further along the station.

Death stalks the decks in five mutant forms. Spores are the easiest aliens to dispense with, and until they can land, they are vulnerable to collision with the skimmer, the drone or each other. If a spore does manage to land, it mutates into a Stalker.

The Stalkers bounce up and down, vandalising the deck until they get bored and leave, or mutate. If it spots a colonist, a Stalker can capture him and mutate into a Nuclon, a malevolent fireball which moves slowly towards the drone, hoping to destroy it and all its occupants. More ambitious Stalkers cocoon themselves inside a Podule, until their transformation is complete and they burst out as a Tracker. These home in on you . . . aaargh!

As you might suspect, progression through the decks reveals increasingly adept and deadly breeds of the above, but to help you keep up with the increased difficulty level, *Intensity* has a system for buying better rescue equipment. Every time a colonist is saved, a large R (Resource Unit) is released from the skimmer's launch pad; at the end of a level, accumulated Resource Units can be traded for skimmers and drones which are able to fly faster and over higher obstacles. These are produced on a production line which requires a longer period of time to build more advanced craft – so you'll just have to wait for those go-faster stripes, won't you?



The graphics are in Braybrook's normal bas-relief style and the opening screens look as though you're about to be flooded in a wash of Alleykat-style confusing menus. However, once the shock of seeing a Graftgold game that isn't a shoot 'em up has worn off, you start to think, 'well what's happening here?' The first couple of games don't give a lot of encouragement, but for some reason you find yourself drawn back to the computer for 'just one more go'. It's not as frenetic or exciting as previous Graftgold releases, but it's still quite playable and addictive. One for Braybrook fans to look out for and for casual players to try for themselves and see if it grabs them.

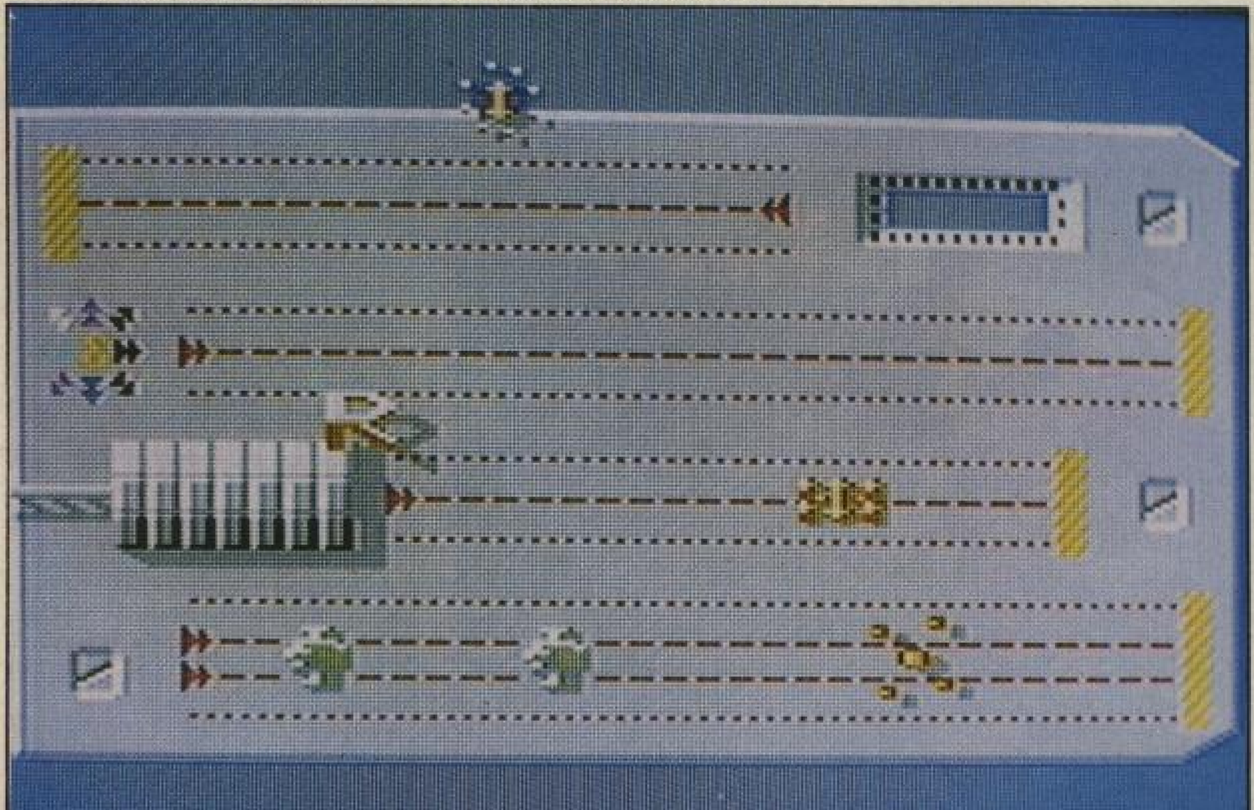


I thought the standard of Andrew Braybrook's games had gone slowly but surely down since Paradroid **– and taking one cynical look at this game, I started rolling my eyeballs. It was lucky I stopped them before they rolled under the filing cabinet, because it turns out that** Intensity **isn't the mere exercise in polished programming I had guessed it would be. It's a pretty easy mistake to make, as such intelligence has been programmed into the movements of the colonists that the game seems to finish the first screen by itself. Unfortunately, later levels proved that just as much intelligence had been programmed into the aliens, and they knew exactly how to work me up into a frenzy of activity, I can tell you ('ere, no, missus, quiet at the back, etc)! If the action was a bit more mainstream (perhaps blasting as well as collide and collect) I think** Intensity **might have been widely hailed as another Braybrook classic. As it stands, I would only go as far as saying it's one of his better games.**



Cor, another Braybrook game, I thought (I have these moments of inspiration). OK, so I didn't think Morpheus **was anywhere near as good as** Uridium **or** Paradroid **but everyone's allowed to slip a bit once in a while, aren't they? Well, looks like Andy Braybrook has slipped again. The idea's original and the graphics look great but none of it really grabs you by the . . . er . . . well, whatever things normally grab you by. As for the sound effects – they were very impressive in** Paradroid**, but you can have too much of a good thing – and I think by now we've had enough. If you enjoy repetitive games and aren't too bothered about having a large environment to explore (there isn't one) you could do worse than buy** Intensity**. You could do a bit better, too.**

▼ Graftgold's latest lacks the polish of their greatest (Boring rhymes Inc)



PRESENTATION 91%
Attract mode, and user-friendly options for one or two players with joysticks in either port, colour and monochrome modes and volume control. Disk version saves highscore table.

GRAPHICS 88%
Small but very nicely animated sprites. Familiar bas-relief decks.

SOUND 70%
Tuneful music, but spot FX are very Paradroid.

HOOKABILITY 78%
Unusual playing style takes longer to get into than that in most games.

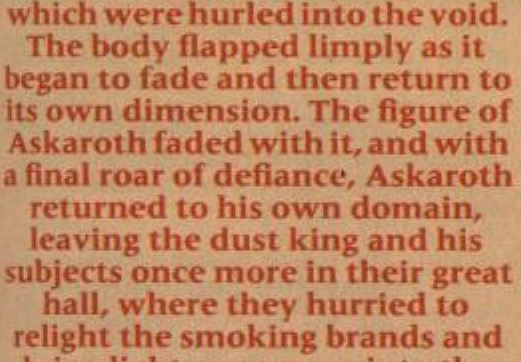
LASTABILITY 86%
16 levels, but just a little more variety would have given it even more long-term appeal.

OVERALL 75%
An excellent game, but doesn't have the broad appeal of Braybrook's previous works because it isn't an out-and-out blast.

WALKER'S WAY

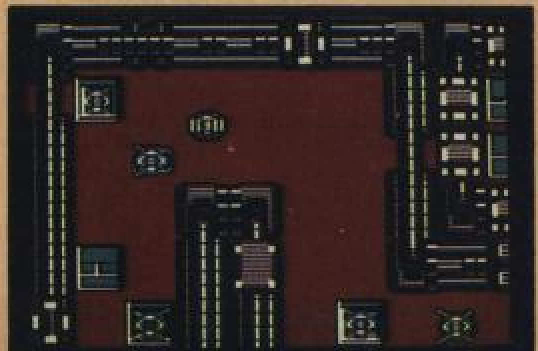
By Martin Walker

With a slow sweeping cut, he parted the mist, and then leapt upward, borne by invisible wings which protected his earthly form. Askaroth hurled bolts of lightning towards him, but they passed harmlessly to each side. As the blade rent the skies, the flames enveloped the upsurper, and the mists closed once more about him. They spun faster and faster, tearing the figure ever higher. And then a great scream was heard; a long wailing cry that drew no pity. The usurper spun helplessly, his blade breaking into thousands of tiny fragments which were hurled into the void. The body flapped limply as it began to fade and then return to its own dimension. The figure of Askaroth faded with it, and with a final roar of defiance, Askaroth returned to his own domain, leaving the dust king and his subjects once more in their great hall, where they hurried to relight the smoking brands and bring light once more into the kingdom. The king stood before his throne, and smiled. 'This month's diary is a bit fierce!'



Saturday 6th August

Well, the music to be played during the *Armalyte* disk level loading sequence is complete – a floating and open ended sequence that should give a few well-earned peaceful moments during the lull between levels, allowing the player to relax the trigger finger



and prepare for further onslaughts to come. The only piece left to finish now is the 'game over' tune. This needs to have immediate impact, as most people will only be hearing it during the time it takes to enter their initials in the highscore table. It also needs to be suitably stirring to give a sense of achievement.

Sunday 7th August

During the afternoon the 'game over' music was finally completed, and it only remains to add my fadeout routine (written for the demo disk) to the actual music player, for use by the 'customer'. It quite often sounds better to fade the music before starting the game to give a smoother transition (more about that when the coding is started tomorrow).

Monday 8th August

The fade routine from the demo was streamlined for addition to the player today, and at the same time I decided to add the facility to trigger a fade at any speed from within a track. The most important thing for customers is to have an easy time with installation. During the mastering of *Hunter's Moon* we found it very tricky to time the loading music so that it faded out at the end. After all, you need to find the best time to start the fade, set a timer to do it, and then keep tweaking the fade speed until the track just fades to silence as the music finishes. The *Armalyte* loading music triggers its own fade automatically and then switches the music player off as soon as the track dies away. I can even do a slow fade over 30 seconds if needed!

Tuesday 9th August

Another sound effects commission saw me in Southampton today, together with demo disks and notepad. It really does save a lot of time in the long run to discuss exactly what is needed before you start work – with sound effects, particularly. It's strange that programmers can sometimes have little idea what they really need until you produce some sound effects – but it's amazing that they can soon find 32 modifications that must be made. This is why I like to discuss it fully first (and of course it's nothing to do with getting treated to a free lunch - thanks Neil!).

Wednesday 10th August

After a call from Robin in Exeter with information on some design changes to *Armalyte*, today saw me extending the 'game over' music, and also making a few tweaks to the sound effects (Whoops! - don't read yesterday's entry guys). I've arranged to travel down to Exeter next Tuesday to see some surprise additions to gameplay, and let them see how a newcomer copes with the new features. This is a vital area of game testing – how many games have you seen that are just too hard or to easy? This one has been played over months and it shows. The big problem can be that programmers become too good at their own games, and so the feedback from an outsider can be invaluable – they all certainly gave me plenty of that with *Hunter's*!

Thursday 11th August

This morning the latest *Armalyte* disk arrived, with various improvements and the dummy music installed. The final compilation of in-game music at the requested memory location took about an hour and a half, although I still made two mistakes which took a little tracing before the title tune burst forth at the start of the game. As the tracks themselves are only a small percentage of the total music file, I even managed to squeeze the cassette loading music into the game file, and this is going to be re-used as an extra 3 minute piece during the in-game demo mode (a total of 10 minutes of music – what amazing value for money!).

During the afternoon, after several phone calls and a few hacks to install a couple of new sound effects, it became a race to get the final music and sound effect files on disk in time to catch the post back to Exeter. I made the final collection with five minutes to spare. Thinking about the expert audience watching my every move in Exeter next week, I then replaced the microswitch on my joystick fire button. It was beginning to feel a bit 'soft', and I'll need every possible advantage I can get!

Friday 12th August

The new sound effects commission was started, ▶

and also a decision to update the sound effects module and editor to bring them up to the standard of the music editor. The sound effects produced are fine, but the editor seems so slow and lacking in refinements after working for a month with the supertweaked music editor. The coding was completed for the module itself during the afternoon, but as I'm away to the wilds of Lincolnshire again this weekend, the editor will have to wait until next week.

Tuesday 16th August

The big day. After limbering up my joystick trigger finger during the 120 mile journey down to Exeter, my big moment arrived at 11am. The latest version of *Armalyte* was ceremoniously loaded up, and with a breathless hush descending over the assembled throng, I plunged into test-pilot mode and entered the experience. And what an experience! I just couldn't stop playing all day – the new features are stunning.

Possibly my most favourite feature is that you can play in such a variety of ways, choosing different combinations of weapons each time you play, and even swapping super-weapons in real time to deal with particularly tricky elements as you play. Every time Cyberdyne see someone play, they see a different approach. I know I've produced the music and sound effects (which Cyberdyne Systems were well pleased with, I'm happy to report!) but this game is my favourite on any machine since *Delta*, and that's a BIG compliment. With any luck the review should be in this issue, so you won't have to take my word for it alone – BUT MISS IT AT YOUR PERIL! I've spent more time playing this than any other game this year!

Wednesday 17th August

Various readers from different parts of the country have been writing to me care of ZZAP! and Thalamus, and your letters make very interesting reading. Many thanks for taking the trouble, guys! I'm afraid that I can't reply to them all personally (I already work a 70 hour week and write the diary!) but would like to especially thank Chris Hester for his epics (the postman needs a barrow to wheel them up the path).

Andrew Roberts sent in many ideas for *Citadel* (some of your thought processes must run parallel to mine, or else you've seen my gameplan!) Rest assured that many of your ideas were already included, and the hidden doors will play an important part in the game. Your idea of collecting 'command credits' (although *Morpheus* used a similar scheme) is novel in that 20 will earn you an extra ship and 30 allow you to skip the present level. Hmmm. Possibilities!

A Farrell (hi, A!) has paid me a handsome compliment in wanting to purchase my Music/SFX editors. As you've probably realised from recent diary instalments, the music and SFX editors are being used solely by me for commissions, so I'm afraid that they won't be available commercially. The demos that were sent out are sample musical pieces only, with no editor on board (for obvious reasons. Hack! Hack!).

Your query on how to achieve parallax star scrolling is really outside the scope of this diary to answer in 'depth' (unless ZZAP! want to avoid these awful puns and give me a separate technical bit!) but briefly, it's all done with characters. By defining a single star in successive positions across one character, and then filling a whole screen with it, you could have 1000 moving stars at once with very little effort! Different layers are achieved by using several characters, each having a single star which is plotted across the character 'square' at a different rate.

Finally, Keith McLeman compliments me on my *Hunter's Moon* sound effects, and voices a topic which is mentioned by many people – the difficulty in achieving good sound effects in games.

There really is no substitute for fiddling! I probably learnt most about producing particular sounds by using one of the early keyboard synthesisers in a band – no presets, no memories, and only one note at a time. If you got a good sound you had to remember how to make it again! The latest keyboard sounds can be so complex that many musicians don't even attempt to program them themselves, but use commercially available disks to load new banks of voices. And if it's any consolation, looking at the game inlays will show you that many top programmers have their SFX produced by specialists – I'm very luck to be able to do everything myself! Just to prove the point, today I rewrote the SFX editor and added some new features to help with the latest commission – no commercial package could ever be that flexible. Experiment with a music utility just making different sounds, and when you get to grips with how to get a particular effect, think of ways to improve it when you write your own AFX program!

Thursday 18th August

After producing some more sound effects (the art is knowing when a sound 'fits' and then leaving it alone!), it was back to *Citadel*. Since the essence of the game is triggering the traps to find equipment, keys, doors and nasty surprises (!) the graphics editor was booted up to try some designs for trapdoor opening. This sequence is important, since it provides most of the feeling of exploration. The timing will be crucial – if the doors open too quickly there's no nail-biting fight with your pursuers before being able to grab a vital piece of equipment; too slowly and you can escape too easily if there's something nasty being uncovered underneath!!



Sunday 21st August

A very interesting weekend, with a suprise guest – none other than Mr Riggers himself! As you might expect, most of the time was spent playing games, and once again out came the old Atari 800! For sheer playability, some of the old games take a lot of beating, and for the record the 'faves' were *A.E.* (Broderbund), *Outlaw/Howitzer* (APX) and *Bristles* (First Star). On the state of the art front, my trusty ST had a treat in the form of a first glimpse of *Starglider 2*. What an experience! Although I did little more than the tourist bit, wandering around having a peek at everything, there seems more than enough to keep most games players happy for weeks, if not months – it certainly makes up for the lack of depth in the original, and look how many people still enjoyed that (including me!). Finally, following a perusal of the complex *Trip-a-tron* (the new Minter mega-package) we ended up listening to the music from *Armalyte* whilst having a session with *Colourspace* on the ST.

Wednesday 24th August

Another few days spent in the comparative comfort of the sprite editor. It's very easy to get lost in this one, as you can not only design the little beasties but also join them together, overlay them for fancy work, and even prepare animated sequences to try out ideas! After settling in for a long session, a definitive trap opening sequence was generated.

Using the multiplexor will allow me to add background details and colour to the landscapes, as well as produce the normal baddies, using sprites. In fact, since the main problem with any multiplexor is making sure that it is *never* possible for more than eight sprites to attempt to occupy the same horizontal 'strip', this will help a great deal by fixing sprites in position on the landscape. If all the sprites may be moving, the alternatives are a lot of effort to ensure that the wrong combination can never occur (*Armalyte*) or nasty flickers and lurchers (*Zynaps*, for one).

Thursday 25th August

The return of the cities! At long last a major advance for the *Citadel* code, namely the addition of the main collision routines to detect walls and other land-based obstacles. The coding proceeded smoothly, and by the end of the day I could move smoothly through the corridors with a real sense of solid matter beneath my feet (?). The only minor bug that still needs sorting out lets MONITOR get impaled on a pipe occasionally, but that shouldn't take too long to trace tomorrow.

Saturday 27th August

I have just experienced the weirdest set of coincidences! Yesterday I managed to trace the pipe impaling bug, and then spent some time 'gametesting' with Paul Beecher, my special visitor for the afternoon. In the evening, Belinda and I noticed a pool of water forming on the kitchen floor – a pipe had started leaking!! After attempting to stop the escaping water, we spent the night with the water turned off at the mains and listening to gurgling all over the house. Then the next morning, to cap it all, before the plumber arrived a circular dropped on the mat promising to 'Add a special magic of magic to your kitchen'! Perhaps it meant a swimming pool. Groan (and yawn). I shall have to be very cautious when I add the explosion routines to *Citadel*!

Tuesday 30th August

After a session which saw my latest sound effects commission nearly complete, *Citadel* returned to the monitor for various small improvements, in preparation for the next big addition over the rest of this week. In fact, after perfecting the wall detection, I spent the evening starting my very own sound effects file with a menacing clang.

Friday 2nd September

Over the last few days the traps have started to evolve. Since that elusive feeling of 'being there' is needed, I have decided to remember the state of all traps on a particular level, so that they are still the same when the player returns to the spot. This will allow strategies to develop, since some situations will call for indestructible baddies to be lured into ambushes, once the player has discovered suitable city defences to commandeer (and has not fallen into the traps in person!). To help with the feel, the initial sound effects have been installed, and can now be tweaked 'in action'.

Monday 5th September

The final day of this instalment, and the start of various new routines. The player's bullets, landscape sprite position updating and other vital areas all involve the multiplexor to someextent, so some study in this area is needed. A lot of things are beginning to come together, so I expect to have a playable demonstration completed by the end of the next instalment. Until then, keep your eyes twitching and your joystick fingers sharp (or perhaps that should be the other way round!)



WORRA LORRA BALLS!

CAN GLANCEY ACHIEVE THREE DEFEATS IN A ROW?

ZZAP! CHALLENGE

Yeeehaa! I had been gleefully awaiting this Challenge for quite a while. Over recent months, my champions have met their match against Houghton the repulsive, unstoppable blob, and even the new ZZAP! inmate and chimpanzee-lookalike Maff Evans. But there is one I can always depend on – that most uncoordinated and imbecilic of reviewers, Paul 'It's a Weapon' Glancey, whose turn it is this month to meet one of my worthy fans and once again show off those game-playing 'skills' which previous encounters have proved exist only in tiny doses.

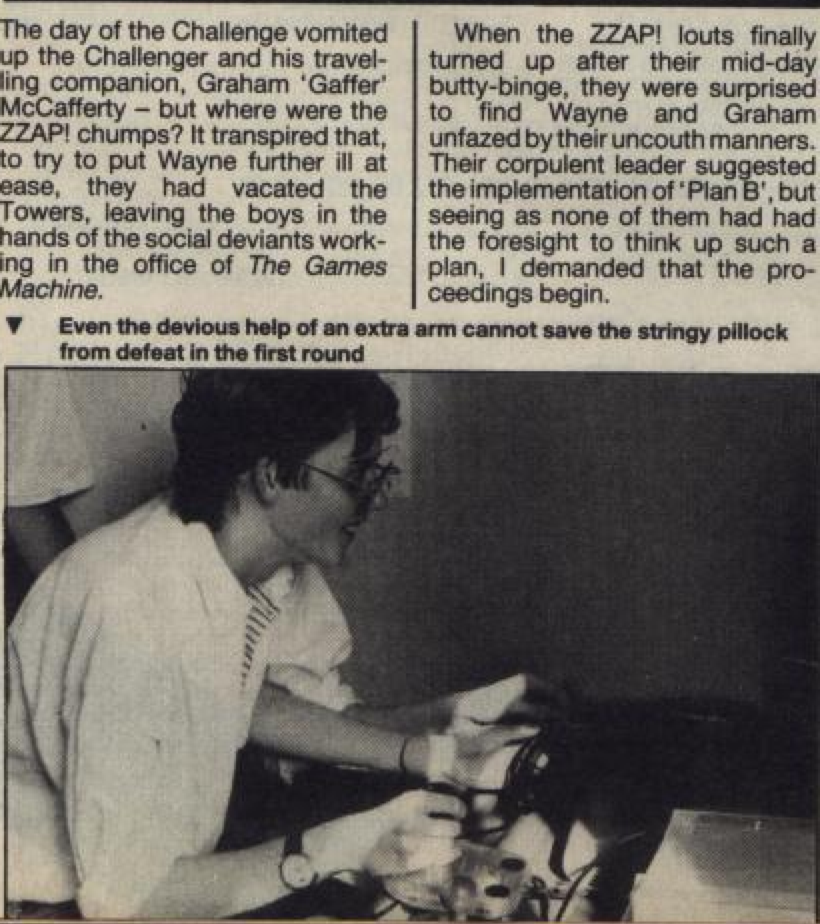
Fool that he is, the weedy boy-wonder was still eager to keep the ZZAP! end up, and so when presented with the file of Challenge entries he was happy to tip them on the floor and sit amongst them for a while. When I told him that he was supposed to be choosing an entrant, Paul grinned his simpleton's grin and handed me the form he had been chewing for the past half-hour. A resident of the Northern metropolis of Redcar, 15-year-old Wayne 'Mooch' Moore was the one chosen to thrash the hide off the retarded squirt, so I despatched one of my more sentient minions to call his home, and inform him that the challenge would be a test of skill on the Fasoulas game of rolling balls, Quedex.



The day of the Challenge vomited up the Challenger and his travelling companion, Graham 'Gaffer' McCafferty – but where were the ZZAP! chumps? It transpired that, to try to put Wayne further ill at ease, they had vacated the Towers, leaving the boys in the hands of the social deviants working in the office of *The Games Machine.*

When the ZZAP! louts finally turned up after their mid-day butty-binge, they were surprised to find Wayne and Graham unfazed by their uncouth manners. Their corpulent leader suggested the implementation of 'Plan B', but seeing as none of them had had the foresight to think up such a plan, I demanded that the proceedings begin.

▼ **Even the devious help of an extra arm cannot save the stringy pillock from defeat in the first round**





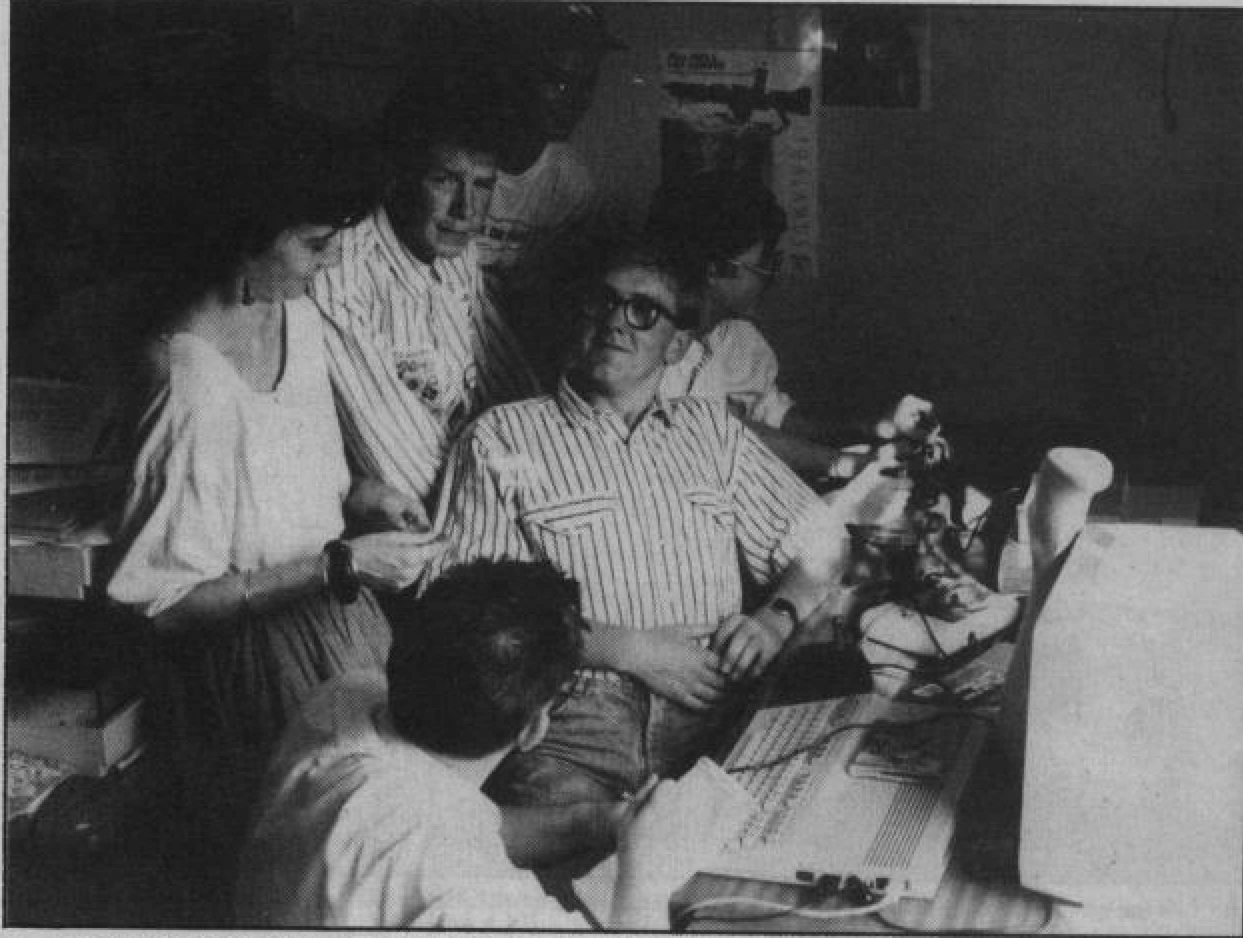
▲ **To assist in his victory, my noble Challenger, Wayne Moore, is given a chemical injection, a silly umbrella hat and some hi-intensity X-ray spex.**

With all the grace of an Arcturan Juice Shark, Wayne drew out his tool for the job – a tried and tested Konix Speedking joystick. Meanwhile the ZZAP! apes carried their champion to his seat in front of the monitor and thrust a Powerplay Cruiser 'stick into his puny fist.

Paul begs for a practice session, a request I magnanimously grant. Wayne has already been practising and innocently remarks that during his practice sessions he has been averaging a score of around 950 points. The sound of the four ZZAP! faces falling is one I shall never forget – Paul's highest score to date is only 527!

Keen to get the slaughter going, I deliver my rulings for this challenge to the competitors. The competition is to be the best of five, five-minute rounds. In those five minutes, the players can start as many games as they like, and all scores will be totalled at the end of the round. After demonstrating the workings of a digital stopwatch to the mentally-bankrupt Hamza woman, we are ready to begin.

The clock starts and my challenger immediately begins his game in the maze of disappearing floors on Plane 8. Glancey moans that before the competition had even begun, Wayne repeatedly restarted the game on that plane until he was placed in the only maze he knew how to complete. I take advantage of the moment and cuff the scrawny, whingeing maladept round the ear, but see there is substance to his gripe. Wayne offers an excuse concerning the poor quality of his VDU at home, but I sense that he is more devious than I first thought . . . Sensing a pleasurable time is ahead I indulge in a Flash 'n' Domestos cocktail.



▲ My Challenger seeks inspiration from the meagre-brained Hamza creature, whilst Houghton tries to psych him out with a cross-eyed glare



▲ Meanwhile, his X-ray beams turned on full, 'Mooch' the cool guy cruises to an 'average' 846 points in game two

Whimpering, Paul turns his attention to the game, beginning on level one. Exhibiting an usually high level of control, he bounces his on-screen ball around the five sub-planes and manages to finish with 55 of his original 90 time units. The skinny wimp must have been snorting Harpic, since he then enters the bonus stage, diligently watches the movement sequence and then heads off in completely the wrong direction. Before I can question the stupidity rating I had branded Paul with, I check his score only to find that the bonus points have been added on anyway! He continues to exploit this bug all the way through his game, but when time is called his score only reads a minimal 464.

Meanwhile, to my immense satisfaction, Wayne has clocked up a mighty 852 with 81 time units left, so he is declared the winner of the first bout. Ecstacy!

My challenger is keen to restart, and the next game is duly initiated. Wayne uses the same tactics as before, but this time shows his confidence by holding a discussion on his *Quedex* high scores. Paul noticeably withers every time the Challenger says the words, 'I clocked this twice at the weekend', and turns up the volume on his monitor hoping to drown his opponent's demoralising utterances.

But the effects of the chatter are quickly exhibited. Bumping out of control, Paul loses vital seconds on the first plane and in his panic, forgets the opportunity to cheat and he completes the bonus stage and collects his points. Thinking in consecutive numbers, his next port of call is the key-collecting maze of Plane 2. The moronic ZZAP! microstar seems to know this plane well, and swiftly locates the goal, finishing with 49 time units. After again completing the bonus level, Paul moves on to level 3 which he finishes with only 8 time units to spare. Panic at once sets in, and seeing that he needs more time he quickly jumps to Plane 7 where bonus time is easy to collect. I find myself smirking as the scrawny pillock steers his ball into a goal square, thus prematurely ending the level.

So disgusted is he with his failure that he ends the game with only 261 points, and quickly begins another. Seeking fast points and being unable to think in mathematical terms higher than seven, he selects Plane 1, then 2, then 3. In the middle of Plane 3 the clock is stopped and the score taken – 189 points, which added to the 261 of the first game makes

▼ Glancey is pistol-injected with a sense-enhancing drug, to increase the pain of what is to come



▶



▲ As the winners proudly display their trophies, the obnoxious pratt is hacked to death in the background . . .

a staggeringly flaccid score of 440 points.

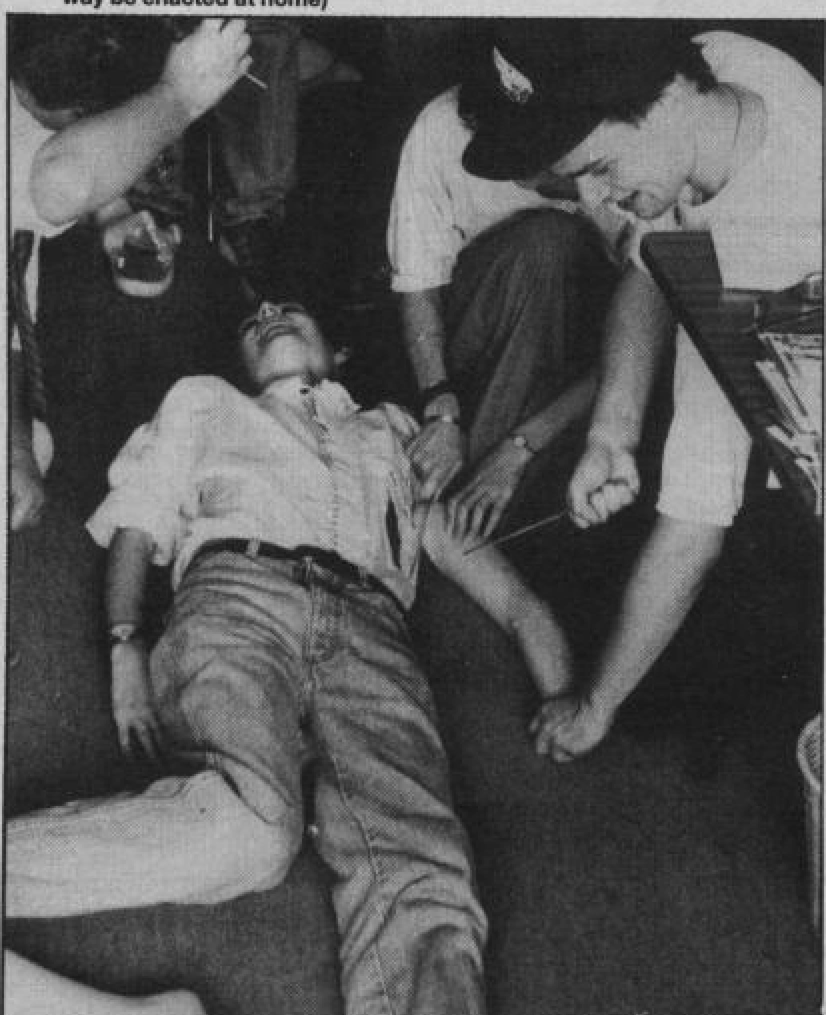
Despite the hindrance of some amazing bottle-bottomed glasses, cool-headed Wayne begins the second round on his favourite Plane 8 and completes it with ease, netting 82 points straight away. Plane 1 is next to fall, followed by planes 4 and 3 which he sails through. At the end of the five minutes his score has reached a mammoth 846 points, one which he describes as 'ummm . . . average'. The ZZAP! hangers-on seem to be getting the idea that this cocky challenger is more than a match for their home-groan competitor, and threatening rumbles issue forth from Gordo's stomach while rumbling threats escape from his repulsively flabby jowls.

Maff gives Paul a good shake to make sure he still works, and reports that he is more or less ready to start what could be the deciding bout. On confirmation of readiness from my challenger, I issue the order to begin.

Wayne obviously realises the devastating effect his voice has on Glancey, and while Paul gets going on Plane 1, he waxes lyrical on his maths teacher's lack of humour and the umbrella hat bought for him by a slave girl from Peru.

However, the mentally flaccid freak of the computer industry seems to have developed some kind of resistance to such distractions, and quickly runs through Planes 1 to 3, even completing the bonus levels as he goes! Problems

▼ The ritual dismemberment begins (Remember kids, the ZZAP! team are fully-qualified murderers, and this scene should in no way be enacted at home)





▲ The odious Geordie offal is dragged away to a cold storage unit, his humiliation total

arise in Plane 3 as Paul runs for the goal. My stentorian laughter circuits kick into overdrive as I realise that the impish dolt has missed one amulet and must begin jumping over the electric seas to look for it. Eventually it is collected and he can leave the Plane, but careless jumping has taken its toll and he finishes with only a few time units to spare.

He quickly tries to boost his flagging time limit by entering Plane 7. Again, careless jumping brings the Plane to an end too soon, and he finishes with 57 time units. After regressing to his cheating methods in the bonus section, the chump plumps for the downhill race on Plane 4, which he bumps and bounces through, losing time left, right and centre. With only 24 units to his credit, Paul enters Plane 5, the puzzle plane, but finds completion in such a short time impossible, and to the groans of his entourage, Paul's sphere explodes.

His five minutes are not yet up, though, and Glancey quickly restarts the game and goes straight for the high-scoring level 7. After picking up 103 points worth of time, he completes the Plane and enters the bonus round, finishing just as Kati, that crude Austro-Egyptian hybrid, calls time. Maff takes his socks off and adds up Paul's total score on his toes – 397 from his first game and 123 from the second – 520 points.

In the meantime, Wayne, too, has been having problems. Obviously applying his chatty tactics *and* playing the game has been too demanding, for after scoring 583 points and completing five planes, he runs into a skull on level 6 and terminates his first game. A second game is quickly started and in the remaining time, Wayne manages to knock up a highly respectable 369 points – that makes a totally invincible combined score of 954! HAHAHAHA! Excellent! I knew I would win!!!

I congratulate Wayne on his utter trouncing of the feeble fool and hand over a voucher which entitles him to £30 of software, and bid him and Graham farewell.

Meanwhile, back in the ZZAP! office, Paul's enraged compatriots exact their vengeance on the eternal loser. After watching the dismemberment party for a while, I retire to my torture cruiser in the stratosphere high above Ludlow, where I can uncork a titanium flask of Hydran brandy, a mixture of herbs, spices and concentrated nitric acid . . .

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1,050,600 Kamal Ali, Worcs Park, Surrey
677,100 Lee Barker, Northwich, Cheshire

HUNTER'S MOON (Thalamus)
618,450 Lee Laurenson, Lerwick, Shetland
472,150 Zsuzui Bettison, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts
227,375 Matthew Upton, Elmley Castle, Worcs.

IKARI WARRIORS (Elite)
381,700 Neil Head, Stourbridge, W Mids
356,100 Nick Frere, Doncaster, S Yorks
338,900 Daniel Ody, Harrow, Middx

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II (US Gold)
104,000 Lee Smith, Southampton, Hampshire
102,800 Phillip Gravett, Whitehaven, Cumbria
92,800 Daren Burke, Romford, Essex

INTERNATIONAL KARATE + (System 3)
484,100 Daniel Carroll, New Malden, Surrey
473,100 Terry Boudram, Colindale, London
441,000 Stephen Cargill, Upminster, Essex

IO (Rainbird)
1,200,170 Jeremy Daalder, Adelaide, S Australia
461,650 Mark Campling, Norwich, Norfolk
393,140 Sir Hans, Ackmaar, Holland

MEGA APOCALYPSE (Martech)
211,730 Peter Clarke, Hartlepool, Cleveland
197,260 Liam Dysrant Harrington Square, London NW1
187,940 Mark Brew, Wokingham, Berks

MORPHEUS (Rainbird)
1,321,485 Richard Pembridge, Wirral, Merseyside
1,266,774 Zap Treeby, Brixham, Devon
1,202,241 Ian Brown, Warners Bay, Australia

NEBULUS (Hewson)
201,240 Matthew Moriarty, Hurst Green, E Sussex
154,400 Michael Garnett, Hatfield, Herts
151,885 Daniel Carroll, New Malden, Surrey

OUT RUN (US Gold)
92,128,800 Mark Crossthwaite, Stockport, Cheshire
87,720,606 Julian Hare, Hampton, Middx
83,246,590 Martin Lear, Huddersfield, W Yorks

PAC-LAND (Quicksilva)
614,990 Jake E, West Bromwich, West Mids
384,950 John Donnelly, Southampton, Hampshire
230,410 Alan Chung, Tavistock, Devon

PLATOON (Ocean)
1,162,100 Liam Dysrant, Harrington Square, London NW1
1,004,600 Michael Aubert, Exeter, Devon
998,000 Alan Smith, Peckham, London

PROHIBITION (Infogrames)
$30,260 Robert Pascoe, Truro, Cornwall
$26,260 Stuart Wannop, Accrington, Lancs
$22,155 Sebastian Stephen, Victoria, Australia

PROJECT STEALTH FIGHTER (Microprose)
64,560 JK Hugget, Huddersfield, W Yorks
22,790 Jonathan Perkes, Woodford Green, Essex
1,170 Robert Fullerton, Hawkshaw, Lancs

QUEDEX (Thalamus)
1010 Craig Archer, Victoria, Australia
999 Steve Pratt, Leighton Buzzard, Beds
949 Martin Huisent, Numansdorf, Holland

RE-BOUNDER (Gremlin Graphics)
11,250,073 Craig Knight, Keyworth, Notts
2,470,584 Marc Hodge, Selby, N Yorks
2,047,832 Robert Wilson, Oldham, Lancs

ROAD BLASTERS (US Gold)
1,114,090 Mark Taylor, Barry, S Glam
1,064,680 Neil White, Craigtinny, Edinburgh
1,020,900 Daniel Lockey, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham

ROAD RUNNER (US Gold)
3,009,456 RA Alessie, Rotterdam, Holland
1,022,100 Jason Faulkner, Cottesmore, Leics
766,580 Glenn Black, Gainsborough, Lincs

ROLLING THUNDER (US Gold)
749,410 Ioan Pritchard, Powys, Wales
730,520 Kelvin Clegg, Hayle, Cornwall
324,640 Tobias Olafsson, Ockero, Sweden

SALAMANDER (Imagine)
232,185 Paul Evison, Buxton, Derbys
232,045 Steven Lounds, Eastwood, Notts
198,610 Stephen Packer, Chelmsford, Essex

SAMURAI WARRIOR (Firebird)
1,827 Wayne Fowler, Basildon, Essex
732 Neil Head, Stourbridge, W Mids
617 Lawson Davies, Pencoed, M Glam

SKATE ROCK SIMULATOR (Mastertronic)
395,050 Stephen Bambrough, Heaton, Newcastle Upon Tyne
326,380 Brian Hambley, Prescot, Merseyside
294,270 Martin Lear, Huddersfield, W Yorks

SLAMBALL (Americana)
15,943,250 Dean Betts, Edenbridge, Kent
11,078,440 G Leslie, Berwick upon Tweed, Northumberland
9,203,820 Phillip Gravett, Whitehaven, Cumbria

SLAP FIGHT (Imagine)
803,425 Vilya Harvey, Perth, Australia
800,950 Shawn Sutton, Southampton, Hants
586,000 Matthew Viveash, Chinnor, Oxon

SPORE (Mastertronic)
969,100 Neil White, Craigentinny, Edinburgh
955,460 Terry Redfern, Buxton, Derbys
947,875 Matthew Cundy, Tavistock, Devon

STAR PAWS (Software Projects)
647,226 Matthew Smith, Warrington, Cheshire
641,592 K Daniels, Northolt, Middx
624,567 G Woodhouse, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria

TARGET RENEGADE (Imagine)
436,700 Bret Crossley, Leeds, W Yorks
426,700 Neil Maudling, Whitehaven, Cumbria
340,900 Daniel Carroll, New Malden, Surrey

TETRIS (Mirrorsoft)
78,986 Stuart Scattergood, Deeside, Clwyd
40,455 Joan Tillotson, Halifax, W Yorks
28,820 Michael Reineke, Lüdinghausen, W Germany

THING BOUNCES BACK (Gremlin Graphics)
3,769,925 Alan Wescombe, Swindon, Wilts
2,053,532 William Callaghan, Tipton, W Mids
1,877,555 Casey Gallacher, Swallowfield

THUNDERCATS (Elite)
2,640,600 Steven Alexander, Cullybackey, Ballymena
2,566,922 Martin Leer, Huddersfield, W Yorks
1,450,700 Matthew Smith, Warrington, Cheshire

TOY BIZARRE (Activision)
545,850 Bjorn Halen, Parpis, Finland
329,550 Anil Khedun, Tottenham, London
275,720 Michael Sharpe, Peterborough, Cambs

TRAZ (Cascade)
176,470 John Glynn, Newcastle, Staffs
60,000 Steve Lee, Guildford, Surrey
23,650 Kudly Bix, York, N Yorks

URIDIUM + (Hewson)
575,005 Tim Goldee, No Fixed Abode
478,025 Neville Lewis, Port Talbot, S Wales
335,350 Wessel Joubert, Belfast, RSA

ZENJI (Firebird)
66,250 Mark Crossthwaite, Stockport, Cheshire
40,225 Mike Gillings, Portsmouth, Hants
33,150 Owen Gorman, Cas Hebbyney, Co Monaghan

ZOLYX (Firebird)
605,681 Edward Yu, Raynes Park, London
524,318 Rob Housley, Thamesmead, London
377,413 M Blaser, Cheadle, Cheshire

ZYBEX (Zeppelin)
445,150 Ged Keaveney, Huddersfield, W Yorks
398,950 Steve Lee,Guidford, Surrey
397,950 Marios Stylianides, London, SW16

ZYNAPS (Hewson)
398,850 Steve Lee, Guildford, Surrey
272,900 Neil Burton, Torquay, Devon
248,500 Torban Bennett, Freemantle, Australia

READER CLASSIFIEDS

WANTED

Wanted: ZZAP!64 issues 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11. Will pay £1.50 for each issue. Must be in acceptable condition. Contact Roland on (0522) 685963. Ring quickly and get a game worth £9.95. Hurry!

Top programmer requires Commodore 64 computer for development work. Will pay £70 plus your P+P costs. Ring (0524) 33553 any time and ask for Jim. Disk drive also wanted.

Jack Charltons 'Match Fishing' game on cassette or disk for CBM 64 machine. Contact A. Jones, 55 Codsall Rd, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton WV6 9QD.

WANTED Datel Electronics Digital Sound Sampler and/or Midi Interface for C64. Must be in good condition. Good price (around £50 for both) paid. Phone Jem on (0782) 504569 between 4pm and 9pm.

FOR SALE

For Sale C64, 1541 disk drive, C2N tape recorder, modem, joystick, books, magazines, and £600+ of software. Sell for £300. Phone: 0306 730253 after 7pm.

Commodore 64, cassette recorder, user manual, DIN cable, two joysticks, basic games Turboer, £250 worth of software, new circuit board, backup board, Everlasting power pack. Swap for ST, Amiga. Telephone: Scotland (03552) 42435 after 5pm.

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Commodore 64 bargain! CBM 64, C2N, Neos mouse, Simons Basic, 2 joysticks, mags and £300 worth of games like California Games, TV Special plus tons more. All worth £800, sell for £200! Please contact (Fak) 710648.

CBM 64, tape deck, joysticks, inc. 2 remote control joysticks and trackball, over 100 original games inc. Predator, Project Stealth Fighter, World Games and Hysteria, loads of mags £230. Phone 0705 329673 after 6pm.

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C64, Load-it deck, Action Replay MK4 Pro. Offers invited. Plus 100's of games incl:– Platoon, SEUCK, Target Renegade, Bubble Bobble, Combat School, Blasters etc. Send SAE to 4 Beckhill Green, Leeds 7, Meanwood LS7 2RU.

MPS803 printer plus 300 free sheets of printer paper to go with it! Just £45!! Perfect condition, hardly used. Must go as soon as possible. Phone (Sunbury 0932) 782643 after 6pm. Please ask for Simon.

CBM 64C, 1541C, C2N, 1802 colour monitor, over £200 original software on disk, inc. Platoon, Morpheus, SEUCK, Gunship, Buggy Boy, California Games etc., 40 blank disks. Only 8 months old. £575. Phone Grant (09323) 40022.

C64 games for sale good condition. Fight Night, I Ball 2, Destroyer, PSI-5 etc. 13 titles £5 and £1 for Budget. Also tape recorder (C2N) £15. Tel: 01 203 7183.

CBM64, 1541C disk drive, MPS801 printer, 1520 plotter, Expert, Action Replay (latest), Simons Basic cartr., joystick, 100+ mags, manuals, loadsa games, worth £1000+. Bargain £400 ono. Boxed. Tel: 041 634 1150 after 7pm (Glasgow).



C64, 1541 disk drive, C2N datacassette, mouse, cheese, Music Keyboard Overlay, 2 joysticks & magazines, £600 worth of original games and utilities. For quick sale – everything £200 ono. Phone Steve on 01-693 6533 after 6pm.

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Mega Bargain, Sega Master System plus Hang On, Outrun, Quartet, Ninja. All as good as new, worth £165, will take £80 ono. If interested ring 0760 21435 any time.

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C64, C2N datasette, two joysticks, 32 original games with fairly recent titles, new slimline case fitted Proff. Only £130. Phone Bognor Regis 267216 after 5.30pm and ask for Graham.

ZZAP!64 issues 11-41 perfect condition complete with free gifts only £20 ono inc. P+P. Also over 25 golden-oldie games (tapes) for sale including Sentinel, Winter Games, Leaderboard, Hypersports and many more. Phone Philip (091) 4175969 for details.

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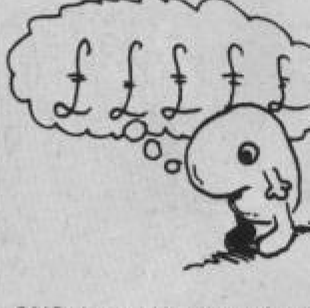
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C64C, 1 year old, vgc, two joysticks, many games including IK+, Barbarian, Nemesis, Last Ninja. Only £120. Also wanted A500 Amiga, will pay up to £250. Telephone anytime on 01 397 8230.

C-64, datasette and 92 original games including Platoon, Morpheus, SEUCK, World Games, Super Cycle, W.C. Leaderboard, The Sentinel, Uridium, Parallax, Spindizzy. Worth over £1000, will sell for £299. Phone Justin on 0239 614565 after 4.00pm.

C64 games for sale, old and new, arcade, compilations and adventures on cassette and disc. Write for list to Hazel Miller, 17 Sherman Rd, Manor Park, London E12 6QT. All quarter to a third of original price.

Commodore 64 with Multimodem, joysticks, Excelerator+ disc drive, Freeze Machine, data cassette with 'Load-It', speech synthesiser, masses of software, games and some educational. Geo's wordprocessor, magazines/books, £260 ono. Tel: Chesham (0494) 782059 will separate!

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Commodore 64 cassette games for sale, all original £5 each. Write for list to Dereck McCready, 43 Rathmore Hts., Ballymena, County Antrim, Northern Ireland BT43 6NQ. Please send SAE for list.

Commodore 64, 1541 disk drive, 803 printer, C2N cassette, joystick, 120 disks, Turbo Rom 2 fitted, Expert cartridge, Music Maker, Breadons Basic. £350 ono. Phone: 0670 819325.

Computer Desk £40.00, old and new software £200.00, Voice Master for 64 £20.00 and Sound System. Will sell the lot for £135.00 - save £160.00. For more details send SAE to M. Allen, 33 Pond Road, Stratford, London E15.

CBM 64, C2N, over 60 games inc. Platoon, SEUCK, Hawkeye, Predator and 2 tape boxes for only £175. Phone Darren (0494) 711793 between 6pm and 9pm.

Commodore 128, datasette, mouse, 80 column TV modulator, Quickshot II joystick, manuals, over £300 of software, 37 magazines, everything still boxed, all excellent condition. Cost £700, a bargain at £300. Phone 0283 31780.



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SWAPLINE

50 blank tapes and Impossible Mission 2, Firefly, Alien Syndrome and Morpheus. Will swap for recent games. May split. Also Sega games to swap. Phone (0793) 46794 to make a deal.

Ivan Kovacevik, 3 Chinner Cres, Melba Act 2615 Australia, wants to swap the latest games tips, pokes for the C64 from all over the world.

Disk Users! Robert Daniels, 3 Castle Field Place, Mynachdy, Cardiff, would like to swap games, demo's and utilities with you. For the C64. Over 2000 titles owned. All letters answered. Tel: 0222 621418.

Disc or Tape Users who would like to swap latest demo's and games, then write to P. Wilson, 11 Lingfield Approach, Moortown, Leeds LS17 7HL. Please enclose Disc or Tape with your latest software, also enclose a list.

C64 User wants to swap latest tape games with people all over the world especially Switzerland and USA. Send list to Hawkeye, 59 Fulford Grove, Sth Oxhey, Wat, Herts. WD1 6QJ. No lamers please.

I beg you to write to me. I need good swappers now! Write to: Mik, Park Lane, 6 Newry Rd, Belleeks, Newry, Co Down BT35 7PE. Cassette for now, disk also at Christmas: Phone (0693) 878695.

C64 disk owners wanted to swap games, demo's etc. Send disks or list to Dave Ashman, 89 Marston Lane, Frome, Somerset BA11 4DG. All letters answered.

Andy, 9 Motherwell Close, Lambath Estate, Hull HU8 0AY. I would like people to write who would like to swap the latest games on the C64. I will answer all letters.

Swap 64/128 games and progs. all over the world. Disk only. All letters answered. Send your latest stuff with disk or list to: Express, Gunnar Aasbo, Slattevn 13, N-2600 Lillehammer, Norway.

Amiga owner will swap: Defender of the Crown, Goldrunner, World Tour Golf, Sidewinder, Impact, Joe Blade, Kickstart II, for a Commodore 64 and cassette (no software required). Will also add money if necessary. Tel: Angelo (0923) 36571.

Bunch of C64 freaks want to swap new games and cool demos with anyone anywhere. Send disks and/or lists to: Z.B. Devs, Pastoor Weytslaan, 31 2180 Kalmthout, Belgium. We will answer all letters.

C64 user wants to swap latest stuff with anyone anywhere. Write to Dave Lewis, 185 Roxborough Gardens, London SE4 1HS. Disk or tape (disk preferred!).

C64 disk users!! Write or send disks to BCS, Ekenasv. 32, 10320 Karis, Finland! All letters and disks will be answered.

64 Disk Users!! Matthew Sears, 154 Comer Road, Worcester. WR2 5JD, would like to swop games on disk with people all over Britain. I will reply to all letters. Also!! Latest tape games wanted.

CBM 64/128 contacts wanted, DISK ONLY. Call Nick Alderman at 100 Tinwell Road, Stamford, Lincs. PE9 3GB or tel: 0780 64280 after 6pm. All letters will be answered.

Disk and Tape users, Adam and Brian, 54 Premier Road, Pallister Park, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS3 8QP would like to hear from anyone to swap games, new or old. We promise to reply. Phone (0642) 226256. England.

AMIGA, to buy the latest stuff (very cheap) contact: PLK 004945B, 2100 Hamburg 90, F.R.G. If possible then send an empty disk, so we can send you our latest list. We also swap news!

PEN PALS

I want to swap games, progr. etc. with anyone on Commodore 64. Write to: Frode Stromme, R.Blak-Stad, GT.7., 6600 Sunn-Dalsora, Norway.

Commodore 64 disc user, arcade puzzle and adventure fan, also sweet on rabbits and Fred Astaire, interested in swapping games and hints. Linda, Kincasslagh House, Burtonport, Co. Donegal, Ireland.

G'Day, I'm a C64 user and I want penpals from 'All over the World'. Your age is not important but you must have a disk drive. Write, P.O. Box 272 Manuka, Canberra A.C.T. 2063, Australia.

USER GROUPS

Amiga, we are searching new contacts. Write to: The Supervis-ass, PO Box 12, CH-1605 Chexbres, Switzerland or call: 021 921 56 21.

FANZINES

'Advenfoe' fanzine for all adventure enthusiasts, 20 complete solutions per monthly issue. Issue 3 includes Hobbit, Hitchhikers plus many more. Only £3.20 per issue. Send cheques/PO's to G. Kirkham, 23 Hope St. Ashton-u-Lyne OL6 9SN.

64 Action - reviews, previews, competitions and features on latest 64 software. Only 60p + SAE (or + 20p P+P) for Scotlands finest Commodore fanzine. Send to Keith Hill, 40 Barnton Gate Avenue, Edinburgh EH4 8BG, Scotland.

MISCELLANEOUS

Postal World of Sport, you play the sports you want to play, £50 for overall Champion, SAE for details to World of Sport, 3 Old Church Street, Aylestone, Leicester LE2 8ND.

'Goal Crazy' computer moderated soccer PBM. Many features include tactics, training choices, player ratings (each match and ability), Internationals, Cups, monthly awards, crowd trouble. For details SSAE to – George Crozier, Hazelmount, Pant, Oswestry, Shropshire. SY10 9QQ.

PBM. Three great games from 'Camelot Games': 'Rugby League Chall.','Soccer Six' and 'The Derby'. Fortnightly turns only 75p. For further details send SSAE to 'Camelot Games', Cae Ymryson, Caernarvon, Gwynedd, North Wales LL55 2LR.

Do you like football and have a strategic mind, yes, then why not send a SAE to DPBMSL, 11 Clarendon Road, Thornaby, Cleveland TS17 8JQ for details of a great new Play By Mail Soccer League.

How can you describe a unique, Science Fantasy wargame in less than 35 words? +++ Project Wanderer +++ For details write to: Project Wanderer, Bradco, 1a Lodge St, Middleton, Manchester M24 3EA, (061-643-5338).


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SLAP FIGHT
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RENEGADE REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE? In the knife-edge world of the vigilante there is no place to rest, no time to think – but look sharp – there is always time to die! From the city subways to the gangland ghettos you will always encounter the disciples of evil who's mission it is to exterminate the only man on earth who dares to throw down the gauntlet on their path – the Renegade. PLAY RENEGADE...PLAY MEAN!
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ARKANOID The era and time of this story is unkown. After the mothership "Arkanoid" was destroyed, a spacecraft "Vaus" scrambled away, only to be trapped in the void... You control the Vaus and have to penetrate 32 levels and then confront the "Dimension Changer" whom you must destroy in order to reverse time and resurect the "Arkanoid." Frantic action and split second timing combine to produce the most addictive and compulsive game.
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BUBBLE BOBBLE TAITO'S NO 1 ARCADE HIT IS HERE! Meet Bub and Bob, two of the busiest beasties you ever saw, as they battle their way across 100 levels of controlled chaos in search of their girlfriends (ahhh!). Jump around picking up goodies and secret weapons as you seek to outsmart your enemies, but beware...hang around too long and you'll face Baron von Blubba, from whom there's no escape!
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LEGEND OF KAGE Legend has it that long ago in Japan the beautiful Princess Kiri was kidnapped by the evil Dragon King, and Kage, a young ninja who was walking with her in the forest at the time, was given the formidable task of rescuing her. You must help Kage in his quest through the forest to the Dragon King's palace, gain entrance, find Kiri and take her to safety while avoiding the Dragon King's ninja guards.
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SPIT IN MY EYE!



IF IT ISN'T THE POPE READING A COPY OF ZZAP!!

Hold a chicken in the air, stick a deckchair up your nose, da da da da da pom pom pom pom popp-a-dom – hey! . . . Oops! Sorry, just getting a bit carried away, there – good music always does that to me. Now, where was I? Oh yeah, I was in the cupboard – locked in the cupboard to be precise – with strict instructions not to come out without . . . wait for it . . . a *DOMARK SPITTING IMAGE COMP*.

Ha! Easy or what! They don't call me the wonderful, amazingly inventive comps minion for nothing you know (a tenner normally does the trick.)

Right then! Get a load of this. How do you fancy winning your very own Spitting Image puppet? No ordinary latex dolly this, but one made to measure at Limehouse Studios to unique specifications. And not just a puppet of anyone, but a gorgeous pouting, rubbery, grinning Spitting Image puppet *of yourself*. Shock! Horror! Gasp! And how much is it worth?

£2000!

Fact is, Domark are just about to release the first Spitting Image computer game ever. All this messing about with rubber-headed individuals has left its mark – Domark have gone ever so slightly . . . well, how shall I put it . . . mad. Yup, instead of just sitting back and gloating (which is what I would I do) they've decided to spend loadsanloadsamoney on you instead.

The three winners of a joint compo run in ZZAP!, CRASH, and THE GAMES MACHINE (along with some EMAP mags) are invited to visit Limehouse Studios on December 17th for a tour round the Spitting Image puppet making factory and studio. Woooh!

That's when each of the winners gets to read out a script imitating a Spitting Image puppet of their choice. The best impressionist wins his or her own personalised puppet. Not that those nice people at Domark are the sort to leave the two runners-up out in the cold. Nope, they've got two Spitting Image goody bags hidden away in a Swiss safe-deposit box just for them. Not only that – there are further runners-up prizes of 20 spitting Image books, 5 Spitting Image videos and 2 pairs of wacky Spitting Image slippers. Beat that!

All *you* have to do is come up with a brilliantly amusing, side-splittingly hilarious sketch which involves all of the Spitting Image puppets on this page. You can use any location or scenario you like – just remember you've got to use ALL OF THEM. If you can stop laughing long enough, stick your creation, *which shouldn't be longer than 400 words* inside an envelope and send it to:

SPIT IN MY EYE COMP
ZZAP! TOWERS, LUDLOW
SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB

Get your entries in by November 15th (Whoopee! that's my birthday – Gordo) or you'll have about as much chance of winning as meeting a six-legged dancing hippo on a wet and windy Scottish night . . . Can I come out of the cupboard now?

Spitting Image







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CAPTAIN BLOOD

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BUDGET TEST

BATTLE STATIONS

Addictive, £2.99 cassette, £6.99 disk

Cue klaxons! Cue square-jawed English actors! Yes, it's wartime again, folks, and 'The Enemy' are getting things off to a flying start by launching a pre-emptive airstrike on your moored battleship. This is no time for heroics, so abandon ship!

Unfortunately, the heroic First Officer has tied you to an anti-aircraft gun before making his own escape, so it's up to you to save your ship and yourself from a one-way trip to Davey Jones' Locker (whatever *did* happen to the Monkees?).

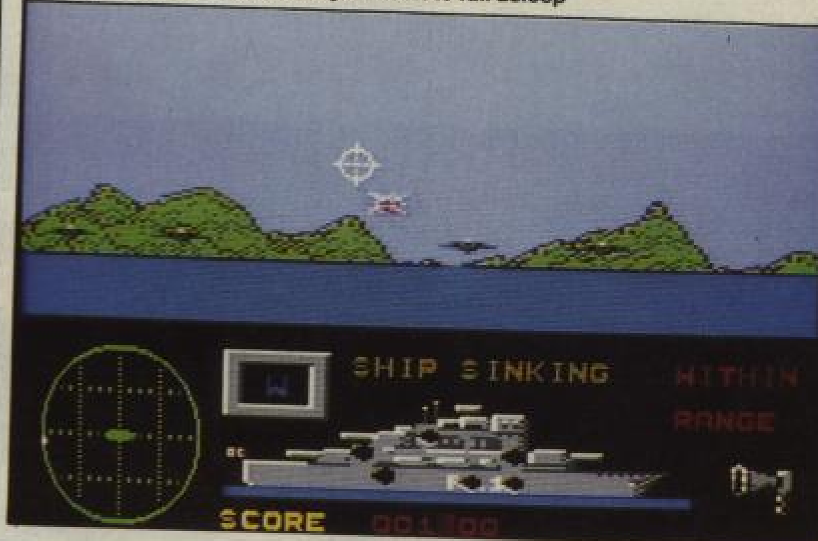
Damaging government property is a serious offence, so rotate your gun, sight up the enemy, then squeeze the trigger before they can drop their load! A RADAR scanner is provided for your convenience, and you are also given a diagram of your ship to show the number of holes currently helping you sink.



I remember playing a game called Bomb Alley **years ago on the BBC, and it was a lot more playable than this. At least it gave you some chance of shooting the planes down, which** Battle Stations **doesn't. As soon as they appear you know that they're going to drop a bomb on you. The background of clouds is OK and the scrolling is smooth, but the planes are bland and boring, as is the land. Come to think of it, that doesn't matter, because the game's rubbish. If you see it, avoid it.**



I found this almost fun, but only because it reminded me of an arcade game I used to play back in 1980. It's a shame that gameplay isn't a lot more varied, as that would earn Battle Stations **much more respect. Unfortunately, shooting wave after wave of planes which fly in perfectly straight formations isn't my idea of fun nowadays. The RADAR and damage indicators are useful touches, but they aren't enough to arouse much interest when they have such weak gameplay to contend with.** Battle Stations **is not without its merry moments, however, and probably the best is watching the tiny blue sprites leap off the ship when it sinks. Well, *I* laughed . . .**



▼ ***Battle Stations* – perfect if you want to fall asleep**

PRESENTATION 70%
Well presented on screen, with lots of useful instruments.

GRAPHICS 55%
Adequate representation of nearby landscape, but aircraft sprites are small and undetailed.

SOUND 44%
Military drum beats and pretty weak spot effects for explosions and celebratory fog-horns.

HOOKABILITY 39%
Simplistic action isn't terribly addictive.

LASTABILITY 30%
Not much to keep you playing after the first couple of goes.

OVERALL 35%
Will probably sink without trace.

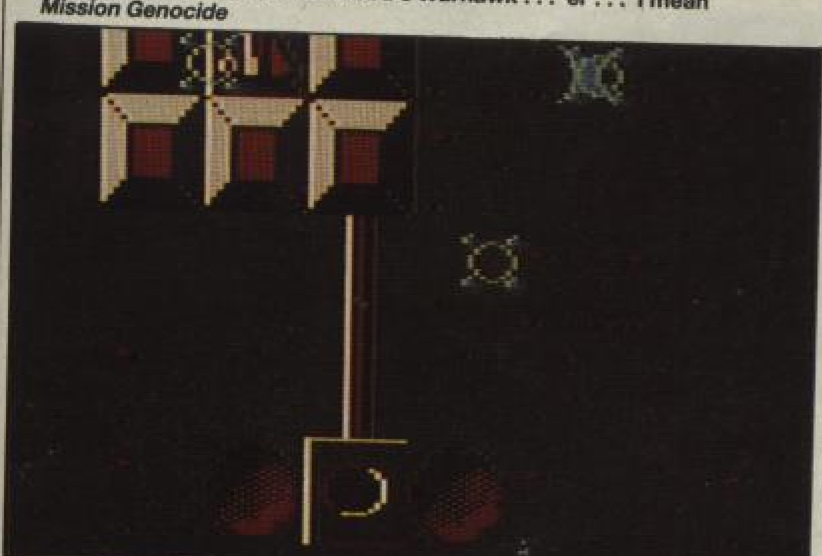
MISSION GENOCIDE

Silverbird, £1.99 cassette

The Bad Star Empire is attacking your home planet of Crys-cit (who makes up these names?!), and you have been chosen to lead the counter-attack. Your squadron of fighter space craft must obliterate the invading enemy forces, thus saving Crys-cit from destruction.

Your ship fires lasers and launches missiles simultaneously, to destroy both enemy fighters and the vertically scrolling ground installations. Icons are sometimes revealed when these features are destroyed, which can give you shields, extra speed, and more powerful lasers and missiles. Before these can be added, glue must be picked up, then black hole icons avoided, as they suck in your add-on weapons (sounds painful, huh?)

▼ **Fast and furious action in Firebird's *Warhawk* . . . er . . . I mean *Mission Genocide***





When Mission Genocide **first loaded and I pressed the fire button to begin, a feeling of *déjà vu* swept over me. The overall appearance of the game is very similar to Firebird's now ageing budget shoot 'em up, Warhawk. The original Firebird release was well received, partly due to the fact that vertically scrolling shoot 'em ups were the 'in thing' at the time. These days this type of game has to have some really special quality to make it shine and unfortunately,** Genocide **doesn't quite have it.**



Just looking at the screenshots on the cassette inlay made me think of Warhawk**, and actually playing the game brought back fond memories of that terrific budget game of old. The blasting is as enjoyable as ever, and the add-on weapons make the game rather more compelling, but graphics and sound are pretty weak. The sprites and backdrops are garish enough to warrant inclusion as toilet graffiti and the SID chip is left twiddling its digits as it lets off a few feeble laser 'peeow's and white noise explosions from time to time. For two quid, though, you should get enough hours of enjoyment from this game to make it worth looking up.**

PRESENTATION 68%
Thoughtful icon display screen and sense of humour throughout.

GRAPHICS 51%
Badly coloured but adequately defined and smoothly animated.

SOUND 32%
Basic sound effects and nothing else.

HOOKABILITY 72%
Like most competent shoot 'em ups, *Mission Genocide* is easy to get into.

LASTABILITY 58%
Plenty of Bad Star nasties to destroy, but graphic changes are the only reflection of progress.

OVERALL 66%
A playable vertical shoot 'em up, but not as good as *Warhawk*, which it mimics.

RE-RELEASE ROUND-UP

So what if Katmandu is the capital of Nepal? Software houses right here have bought up these old games and are endeavouring to give them a wonderful, new lease of life by putting them back on the shelves at a budget price. Introducing this month's batch is the one they know only as Paul 'Economy Size' Glancey. Hit it, Paul . . .

BUBBLE BOBBLE
Silverbird, only £1.99!

This superb conversion of the Taito coin-op puts you (and a chum) in the leathery skins of bubble-blowing Brontosauri. Bub and Bob, the dinos in question, have to bounce through 100 screens of platforms, encapsulating monsters in bubbles, then bursting them to release bonus point objects. Other items appear, providing their lucky collector with BIG point bonuses or such superpowers as the ability to run and release bubbles at speeds which are nothing short of staggering and to shoot devastating fireballs at all and sundry. It's madcap . . . wacky, even . . . and it's loads of fun. In its original ten quid incarnation, ZZAP! awarded *Bubble Bobble* 97% and a Gold Medal. At this price the game is an absolute steal, and anyone who missed out on it back then would have to be really rather silly not to get hold of it now.

OVERALL 98%





METROCROSS
Kixx, £2.99

Another coin-op conversion, this time from a Namco/Atari original, which puts you in the designer trainers of a person whose task in life is to run from one end of a course of obstacles to the other, within a strict time limit. Hurdles, rolling Coke cans and malevolent paving slabs are all out to slow you down to certain-death speed, so timely leaping is the order of the day. Clever joggers can gain extra puntos by kicking over cans, or gain a speed advantage by leaping onto one of the skateboards which appear from time to time. *Metrocross* isn't really outstanding in any field, having chunky graphics, an odd tune and rather monotonous gameplay, but it provides enough entertainment to make it worth the small financial outlay.

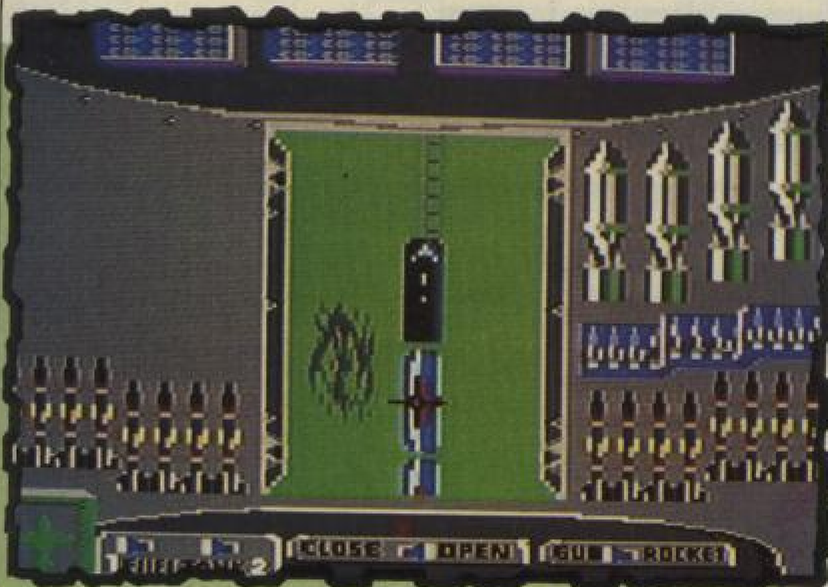
OVERALL 60%

TAU CETI
Mastertronic, £1.99

A meteorite has damaged a computer controlling planetary robot defence systems and a huge nuclear reactor – which is now threatening to explode, making the planet Tau Ceti uninhabitable. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to pilot a ground skimmer through Tau Ceti's network of colonies, hunting out the reactor's cooling rods, and thus saving the planet. The robot forces don't seem to realise you have their planet's welfare at heart and make a point of showing off the quality of their laser marksmanship. It's a 3D shoot 'em up adventure of remarkable quality: the buildings on Tau Ceti are all shaded according to the position of the sun, which tracks relentlessly across the sky, creating very atmospheric day and night effects. Another Commodore classic of yesteryear which makes an unmissable budget release.

OVERALL 93%

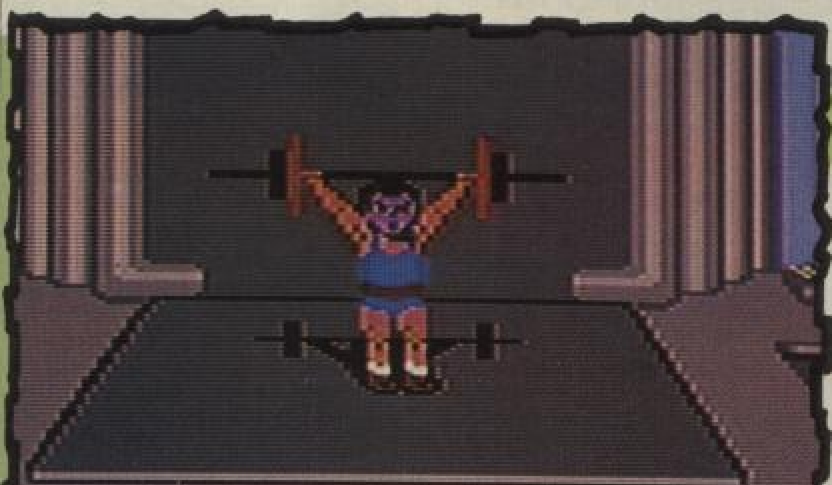




KRAKOUT
Kixx, £2.99

This early *Arkanoid* variant tried to be different by turning the play area through 90°, but the basic ball-bouncing, brick-busting gameplay is the same. All the features which have since become standard are in there, too – missile-firing, sticky, doubled and elongated bats, extra lives and slower balls. And that's it, really. Just get rid of all the bricks on the screen and it's on to the next level. The graphics aren't quite as polished as the official Imagine conversion and the sound hovers just above mediocre, but there's probably enough gameplay in *Krakout* to keep you at it for a while. It's certainly a more tempting purchase now than it was when it had a £9.99 price tag, but there are better, similar games at a budget which are more worthy of your money, namely *Ricochet*, *. . . TRAZ* and *Ball Blasta*.

OVERALL 60%



GAUNTLET
Kixx, £2.99

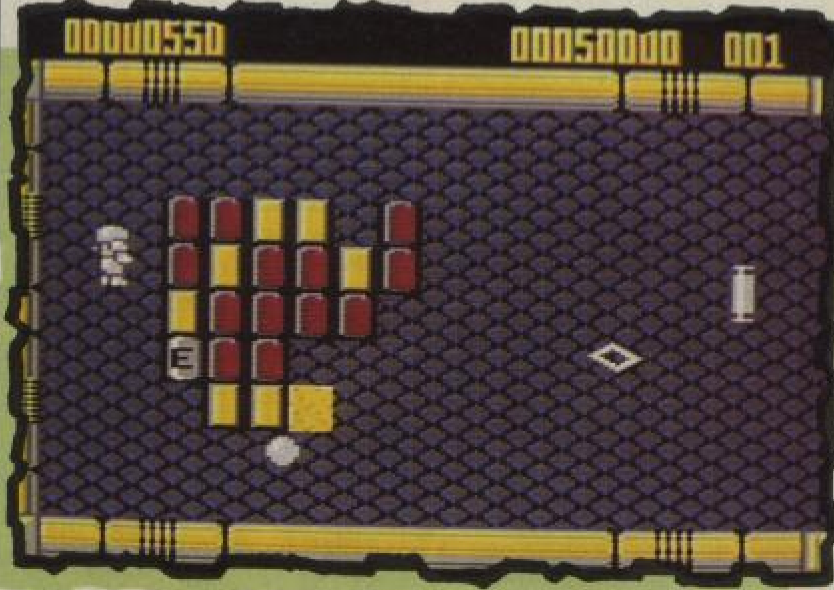
The top-grossing arcade game came to the C64 in late '86 and attracted good reviews all round. Up to two players each take control of one of four characters, all of whom have varying magical and physical attributes. They are then transported into a series of 512 scrolling dungeons, all jam-packed with a multitude of monsters which wander through the corridors creating aggravation for your intrepid party. Fight them either hand to hand or by shooting them, then collect food and ale to heal your wounds. Personally, I never really got on with *Gauntlet*. The action is just a smidge too repetitive and in single player mode the odds are really stacked against you. Still, the conversion is a reasonably accurate one, and anyone who was hooked on the arcade original will doubtless feel the urge to play this again and again.

OVERALL 80%

ACE OF ACES
Kixx, £2.99

From the stables of Accolade comes this arcade flight-sim, which has you flying over WW2 Europe in your RAF Mosquito fighter-bomber. Dropping your deadly cargo on submarines or POW trains, shooting down London-bound V1 Doodlebugs and squadrons of Junkers bombers *and* fending off attacks from enemy fighters might seem like a big job, but it's all in a day's work for a Battle of Britain pilot. *Ace of Aces* is very nicely presented, apart from a slightly lengthy multiload, and the graphics, especially the convincing cockpit views, are everything you would expect from an Accolade product. The different missions make gameplay much more varied than most games of the type, especially those at this price, so it's well worth checking out the shelves for this one.

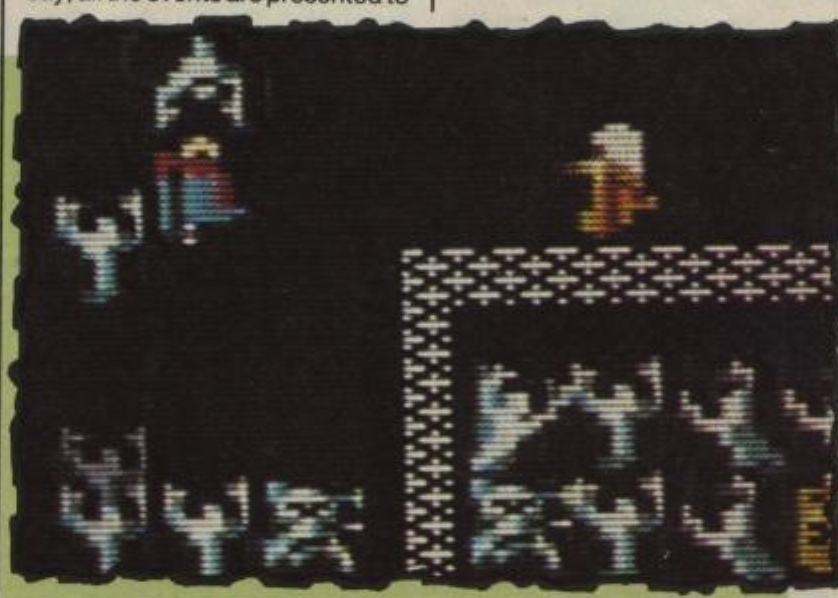
OVERALL 85%



WORLD GAMES
Kixx, £2.99

This is an eight-event sports simulation produced by Epyx when they were at their programming peak. In it you can lift weights in Russia, ski a slalom course in France, toss cabers in Scotland, dive from a cliff in Mexico, ride a bull in the USA, stay on a rolling log in Canada, jump barrels on ice-skates in Germany and wrestle Sumo-style in Japan, all without leaving your chair! Needless to say, all the events are presented to perfection, with excellent graphics, astounding sound and thoroughly absorbing gameplay. There's loads of variety in the game and it's bound to have your attention for ages. At this price, no-one who missed it the first time around can afford to neglect what must be one of the best value for money packages on the market for the C64.

OVERALL 96%



SUPERCUP FOOTBALL

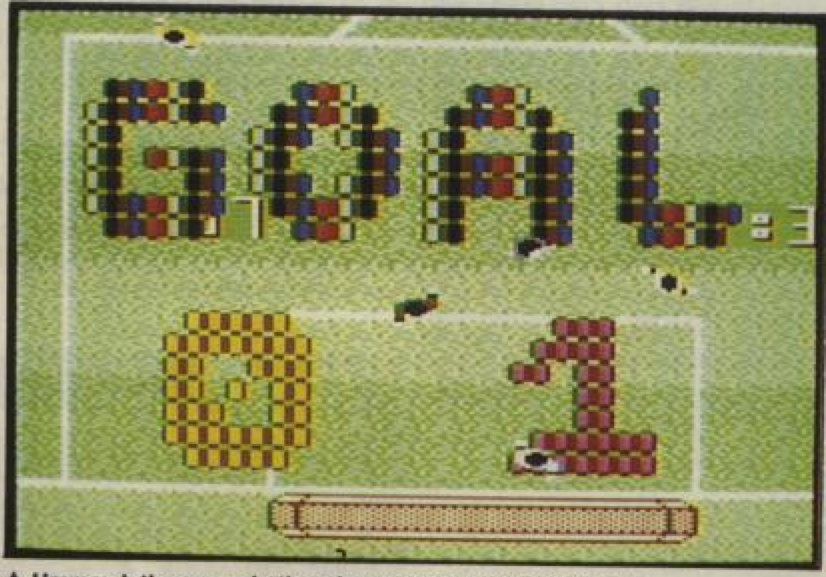
Rack It, £1.99 cassette

Taking into account parallel universes existing in a single blade of grass, it is entirely possible that millions of lives can be wiped out in one single football match. With current video-game trends, it seems perfectly obvious that a football simulation should be made available . . . *Ah, my fabled multi-level pencil bender. The custard's fine, Doctor Crapulence gibber, gibber* . . . (This comment has been brought to you by Maff's Hatstand Products Inc, third balloon on the right, Moonpie City).

But seriously folks . . . Rack It's latest release is an overhead scrolling football simulation for either one or two players against the computer. A number of options can be selected to alter the game, including strip and pitch colours, pitch texture and difficulty level. Also available is a curved 'banana' shot to swerve around players. Every time a goal is scored, the player is notified by a large flashing GOAL! message and a suitably retarded footballing tune.



Hmmm . . . this is very reminiscent of European 5-a-side, **except it's a much better interpretation of the overhead-scrolling footy sim. Presentation-wise it's pretty good – nine skill levels (and the ninth is a real toughie), a four-way scrolling pitch and a banana shot (who mentioned bananas?) Having said all that, it's not terribly exciting, mainly due to the uninspired control method – it's more like pushing a medicine ball around a muddy field than a footy – and it does all look a bit bland. Oh well, I s'pose we'll still have to wait for Microprose/Sensisoft's version . . .**



▲ **Hmmm, let's see – what's going on here, I wonder? (Ironic Captions Inc.)**



Before Taito's World Cup, **all football games seemed to have forced perspective horizontally scrolling pitches, but now there are more overhead view games appearing on the scene and** Supercup Football **is just one more of them. The gameplay is rather enjoyable especially in two player mode, but occasionally the action tends to get rather annoying, like when you can't select the right player or accidently kick a banana shot which flies off the pitch. Moans aside, it isn't too bad and should hold your attention for a time, but serious football fans may become bored after a while, especially if there is no second player to challenge.**

PRESENTATION 78%
Numerous options and competent layout.

GRAPHICS 56%
Portray the action nicely, but the overall look is a little bland.

SOUND 39%
A few jolly tunes and effects but that's all.

HOOKABILITY 71%
The action is fast enough and should keep you held for a while.

LASTABILITY 66%
The single player game could become boring, but the two player game partly makes up for this.

OVERALL 67%
An adequate overhead view footy game which isn't too bad for the price.

VECTORBALL

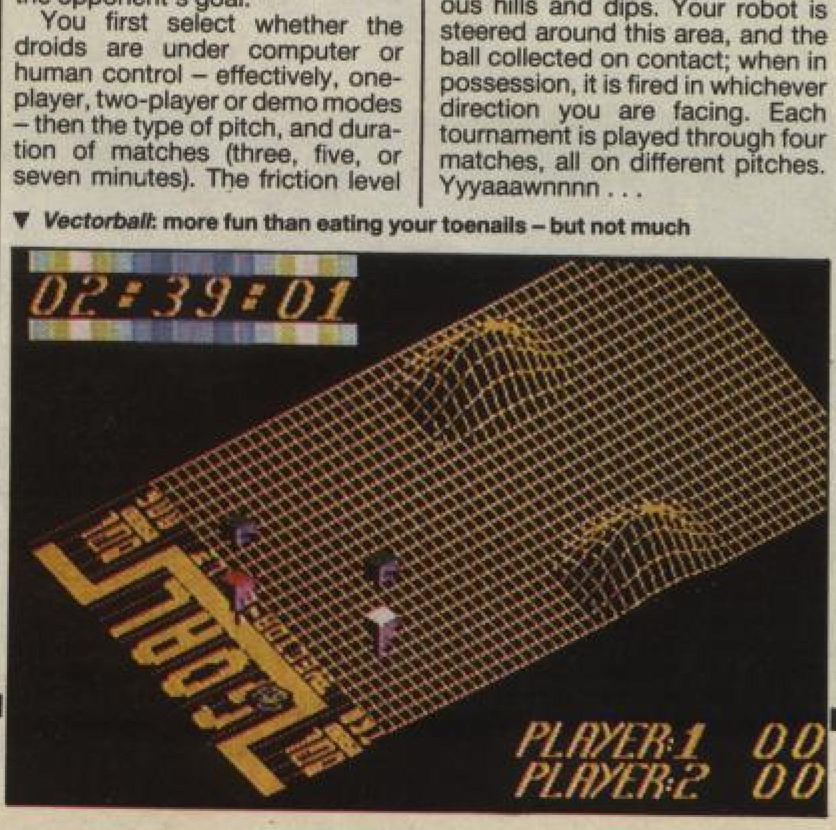
MAD, £2.99 cassette

Futuresports have taken a turn for the worse. *Vectorball* is such a game played in a long rectangular arena over a contoured pitch. Two robots fight over a puck-like ball and guide it into the opponent's goal.

You first select whether the droids are under computer or human control – effectively, one-player, two-player or demo modes – then the type of pitch, and duration of matches (three, five, or seven minutes). The friction level is finally chosen, which determines your maximum speed and ease of slope climb.

The Hills, The Ditches, Wave City and Megamix are the four courses, and are made up of various hills and dips. Your robot is steered around this area, and the ball collected on contact; when in possession, it is fired in whichever direction you are facing. Each tournament is played through four matches, all on different pitches. Yyyaaawnnnn . . .

▼ ***Vectorball*: more fun than eating your toenails – but not much**





This is like A 'n' F's Xeno, **only with slopes, and nigh on zero playability. The pitches and droids are all very high-tech looking, but robot control is very difficult, and the contours make things a lot worse. No matter what friction level, you whizz all over the shop, waggling the joystick in a vain attempt to score a goal. Ball possession is no guarantee of progress, as a shot spits the ball a feeble distance ahead of you, to be picked up by your opponent. To call** Vectorball **frustrating is a big understatement, and its visual novelties are just a pain.**



The 3D playing area is nicely drawn, with effective contour patterns, and the movement across them is quite realistic. ***But*** **(and this is a big but), the game itself is totally unplayable! It's virtually impossible to gain any control over your drone and the feeling of helplessness is driven home as your opponent scores goal after goal when all you can do is sit and watch. Another aspect that doesn't help any, is the unbelievable amount of delays. If you want futuristic ball sport, dig out** Ballblazer **– don't even consider this.**

PRESENTATION 29%
A number of options, but the control system is a joke.

GRAPHICS 68%
The contoured grids are attractive, but flick-screens are confusing.

SOUND 39%
Mediocre music and just three effects.

HOOKABILITY 17%
The wild inertia makes your first few games difficult . . .

LASTABILITY 9%
It doesn't get much easier.

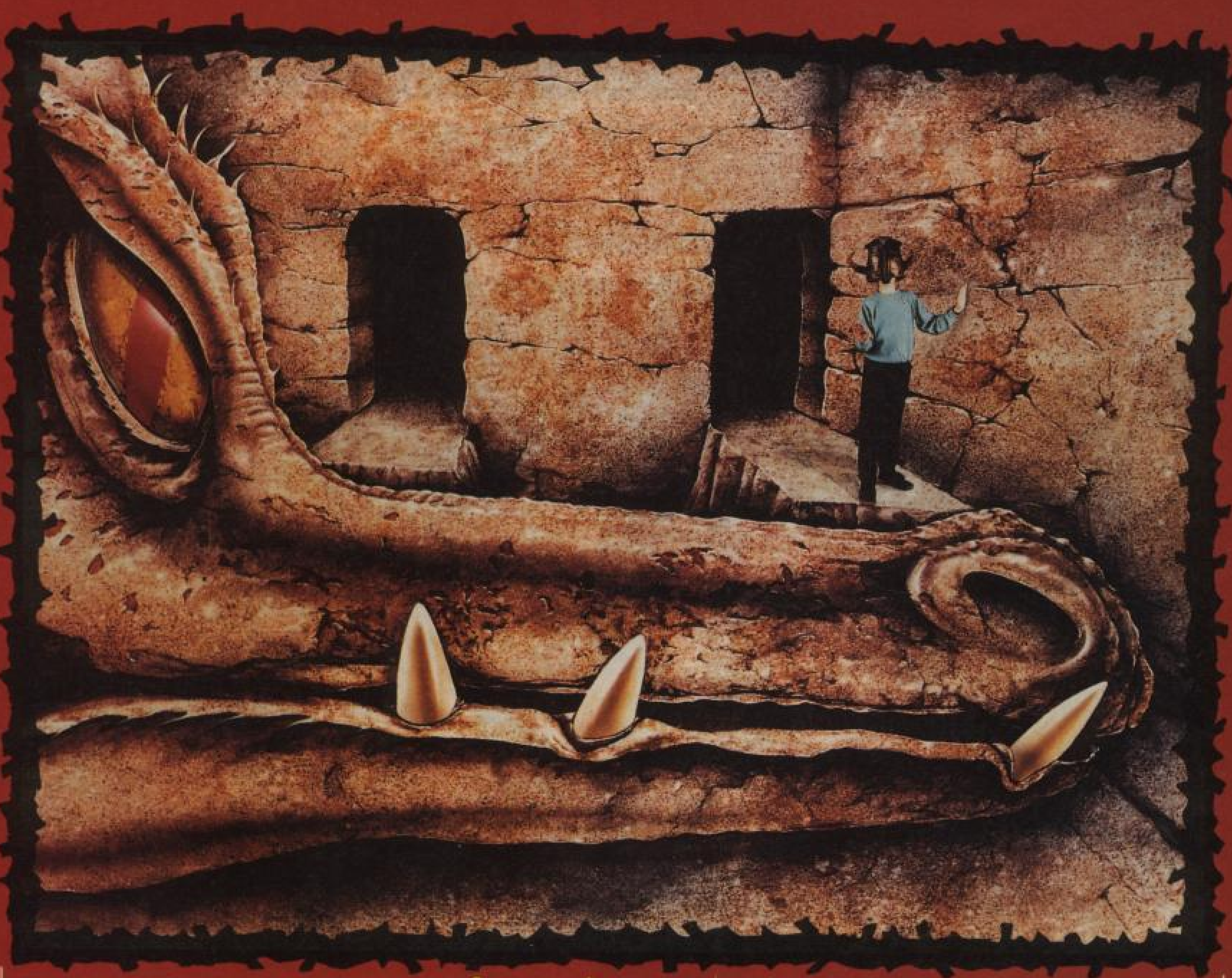
OVERALL 11%
An unplayable attempt at a futuresport game.





Screenshots taken from ATARI ST.

Screenshots taken from SPECTRUM



A KNIGHT TO REMEMBER

You're standing face-to-face with a fire-belching dragon, its silver scales shimmering in the dim light. You lost your sword a couple of rooms back when you were forced to give it to an orc. All you have left is a dwarvish dagger and you know your stamina is low. In front of you lies a perilous chasm crossed by a rickety, rotting rope bridge. If you attempt to fight the dragon you probably won't survive, but if you try the bridge . . . ? The dragon snorts with impatience and lifts one of its lethal claws. It takes a step forward – you feel the hot breath fanning your cheeks. There's a horrible stench suggesting lingering death. You hear a thud as the claw hits the wall – just missing you.

▶ **What now?**
Throw dagger

▶ **But you haven't got the dagger**

The dragon steps forward and engulfs you in flames. You feel the blood in your veins boiling and your heart pounds in a final painful convulsion. The light dims.

▶ **You are dead.**

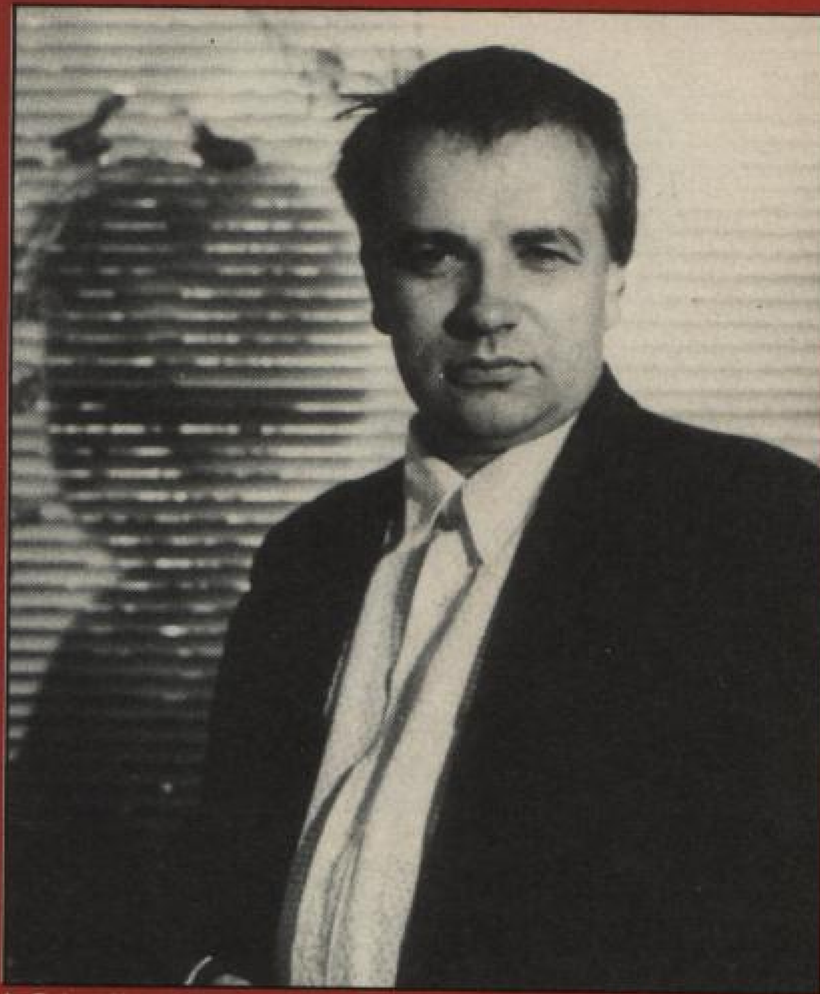
Whether you're an ardent fan or just a casual adventurer you'll know how frustrating a response like that can be. When you've only got 8 or 16-bits and a host of computer-controlled characters to play with, there are bound to be limitations. You can only have so many surly dwarves, fire-breathing dragons or smiling kangaroos, and their reactions (spiteful, helpful or murderous) will always be exactly the same.

So – wouldn't it be great if you could have goblins and wizards unpredictable enough to fry you to a frazzle one minute and buy you a Big Mac (plus extra fries) the next? If you didn't have to rely on wordy descriptions or blocky graphics to really get the feel of a game? If there was more than one solution to an adventure, each of which depended entirely on your own abilities and the route you chose to take?

If you've tuned into Anglia TV's *Knightmare* recently, you'll know that you *can* have all these things and more. Based on the concept of the computerised adventure game, it transports a fully interactive dungeons and dragons scenario – complete with real-life characters, simulated dragons and astoundingly convincing special effects – to your TV screen.

Each quest is tackled by a team of four contestants aged between 11 and 14: an almost blindfolded dungeoneer wearing the 'helmet of justice', is guided through an underground maze by his team-mates who watch the whole thing through a 'magic mirror' in the relative comfort of the dungeon's ante-room.

As if wearing a helmet that restricts your field of vision to what's directly in front of you and listening to three friends all shouting conflicting advice at the same time isn't enough, you also have to cope with a bewildering array of men, mages, maidens and monsters. As you're a bit of an alien runt, with a thing that looks like an upturned ice-bucket on your head, they're not exactly going to be brimming over with respect. More likely they'll ask for a gift, the answer to a riddle or a spell. On the other hand, blood dripping from a dragon's jaw, a devious grin on an axeman's face or a snake with a rattling sting in its tail might be a sure sign that it's time to run.



▶ Robert Harris, who worked on *Hitchikers Guide* before *Knightmare*

The characters are played by actors. As they can't tell in advance how a dungeoneer is going to react, they can't simply enact their script as they would in a play. Wizards, dragons, knights and halflings must decide on the spur of the moment whether to accept a bribe, offer help, ignore or attack. It can get pretty nerve-racking – if they make an inappropriate reply the painstakingly reconstructed fantasy illusion simply crumbles. What seemed like a sinister world of dark and dimming passageways suddenly turns back into an ordinary TV studio filled with technicians, actors, empty coffee cups and lights.

To prevent such dislocation, each adventure, which is usually transmitted in two or three parts, is actually played right through in one long go. Not only that – Treguard, the Dungeon Master (played by Hugo Myatt), is always on hand to interrupt with useful advice or a timely warning. He watches the proceedings at every turn with a discerningly . . . er . . . well . . . Dungeon Masterish eye.

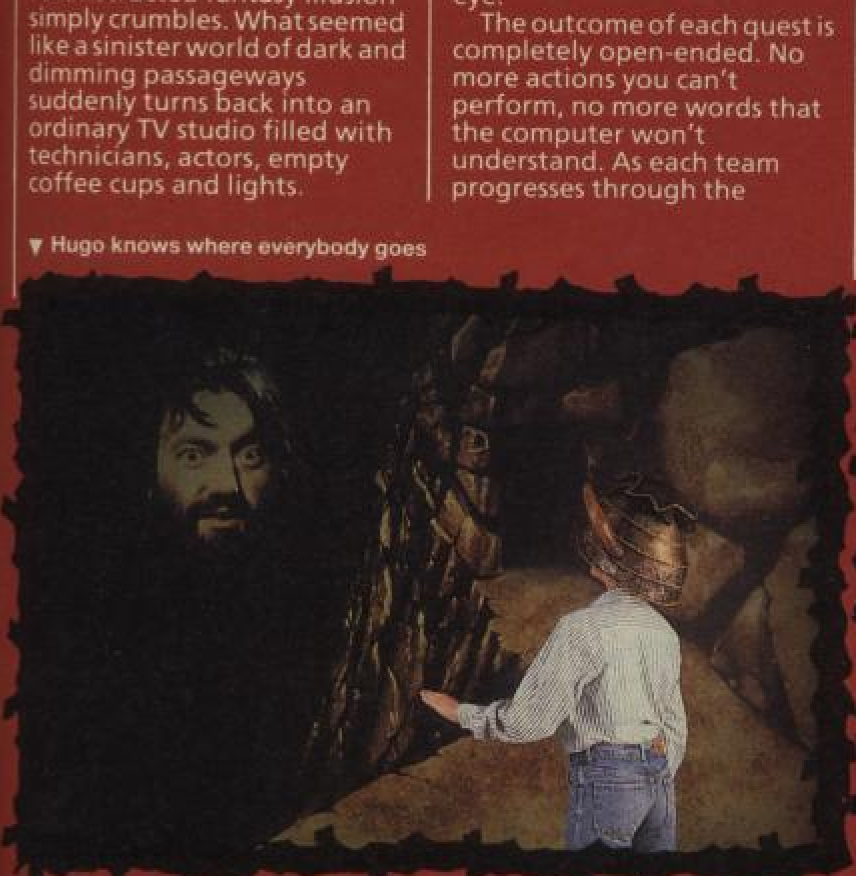
The outcome of each quest is completely open-ended. No more actions you can't perform, no more words that the computer won't understand. As each team progresses through the dungeons' increasingly difficult levels, the only factors they are bound by are the dungeoneer's waning strength and the design of the dungeon. The rest is up to them . . .

The pilot series, devised by Tim Child and designed by Robert Harris, which was shown for the first time last year, ran to eight episodes – each one grossed an audience of around four million. The effects were of such high quality that they won the Parisian Jean D'Arcy Award for Video Production. Not bad huh?

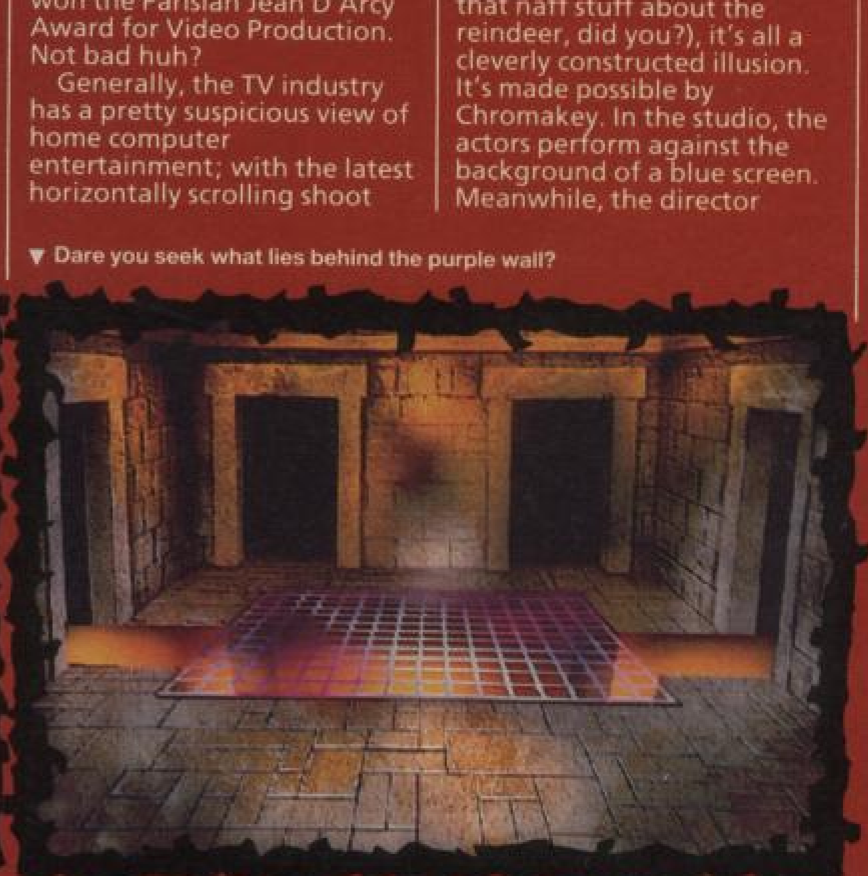
Generally, the TV industry has a pretty suspicious view of home computer entertainment; with the latest horizontally scrolling shoot 'em ups taking up more and more of young people's time (wouldn't *you* prefer *Wizball* to *Bullseye*?) it has obviously cost them one or two viewers – especially in the afternoons, when *Knightmare* is screened. It took Tim Childs several attempts to persuade Anglia to view the computer industry positively and consider that a show based on a PC game might actually work.

So – how *does* it work, then? Like Santa Claus (you didn't believe all that naff stuff about the reindeer, did you?), it's all a cleverly constructed illusion. It's made possible by Chromakey. In the studio, the actors perform against the background of a blue screen. Meanwhile, the director

▼ Hugo knows where everybody goes



▼ Dare you seek what lies behind the purple wall?



superimposes a signal from another camera over the blue. Though the dungeoneer and the actors can't see the finished effect, back in the dungeon ante-room and on your TV screen, it looks exactly like the real thing. Sounds neat – but only if you're careful. The perspective of the scene has to match with the angle of view – otherwise you could end up with all sorts of discrepancies. To avoid problems, the chamber is drawn to a strict grid while the camera stays fixed in a single position all the time.

Right – now you've grasped the technicalities (you have, haven't you?) get out your sticky-back plastic and your empty washing up bottles and wait for a step by step guide on how it's done (by the way – you'll need a basic budget of at least £100,000).



▲ Deciphering the curse of the Scarab Room in Anglia TV's new series of *Knightmare*

◆ First, draw your picture
The paintings that comprise the backgrounds correspond with the predetermined grid pattern. Each damp staircase, creaking doorway and dripping passage starts out life as a written brief from the production team to the artist, Dave Rowe. He begins by drawing pencil roughs which ultimately develop into the finished paintings. For help with some of the stone effects David makes use of a library of slides comprising shots of cathedrals and churches. For a more realistic end result, he tries to incorporate as much texture as possible.

◆ Add Robert Harris
Well, Robert Harris and his 24-bit Spaceward Supernova, to be exact. Robert, who used to work on the TV version of *Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*, turns David's pictures into computerised images which can be called up from the Supernova's potential store of 1024 hi-res frames. It allows Robert to alter the texture and colour of particular paintings by drawing over them using an electronic pen and pad. Scenes can be changed at the touch of a button. At points where the dungeoneer has to choose between one of several doors all the producer has to do is hit the appropriate key and the correct backdrop appears without any loss of continuity. No wonder it cost around £85000!

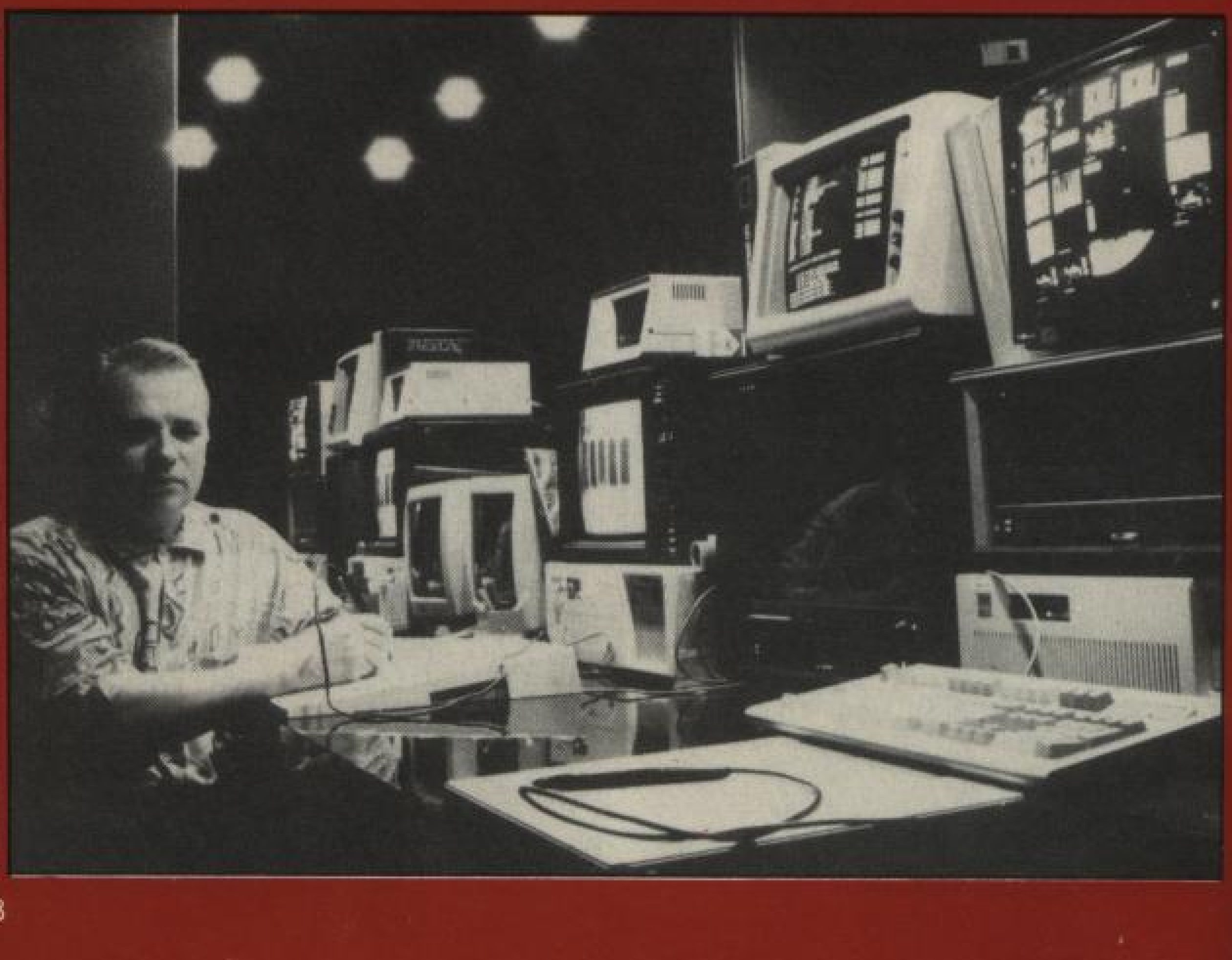
◆ Throw in some animation
Robert has devised a personalised technique. Purely using the computer would involve creating a model and storing its movements as an animated 3D pattern. Instead, Robert makes use of an animation studio: a monster is made out of clay and animated through a movement cycle. Each step is shot by video camera and digitised. Using this method all sorts of fantastic illusions which make incredible use of the quality of light can be created. Practically no luminous snake, slimy stick insect or headless gorgon is too complex for the Supernova.

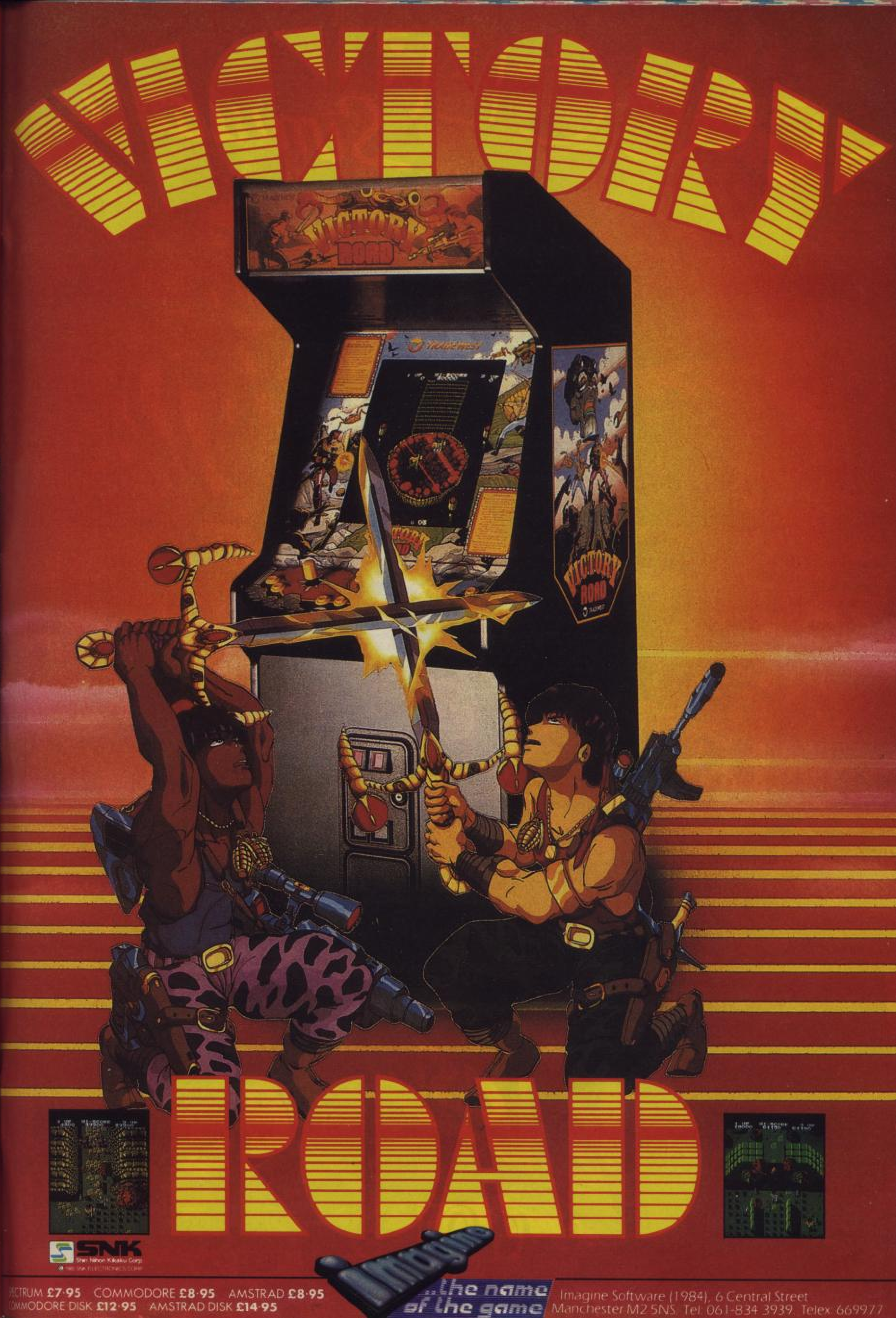
◆ Keep thinking
As preparations for the first series progressed Robert was able to introduce more and more refinements. Digitised skeletons and monsters were manipulated to perform more and more complicated actions – even the sets were given a bit of extra depth. To the endless sheets of blue cloth, stairs and cut-out objects were added: now, when his team-mates see him ascending a cold, dank, castle staircase, the dungeoneer at least has a proper set of steps to climb. Obviously, the more complex the set feels, the more realistic the Knightmare becomes.

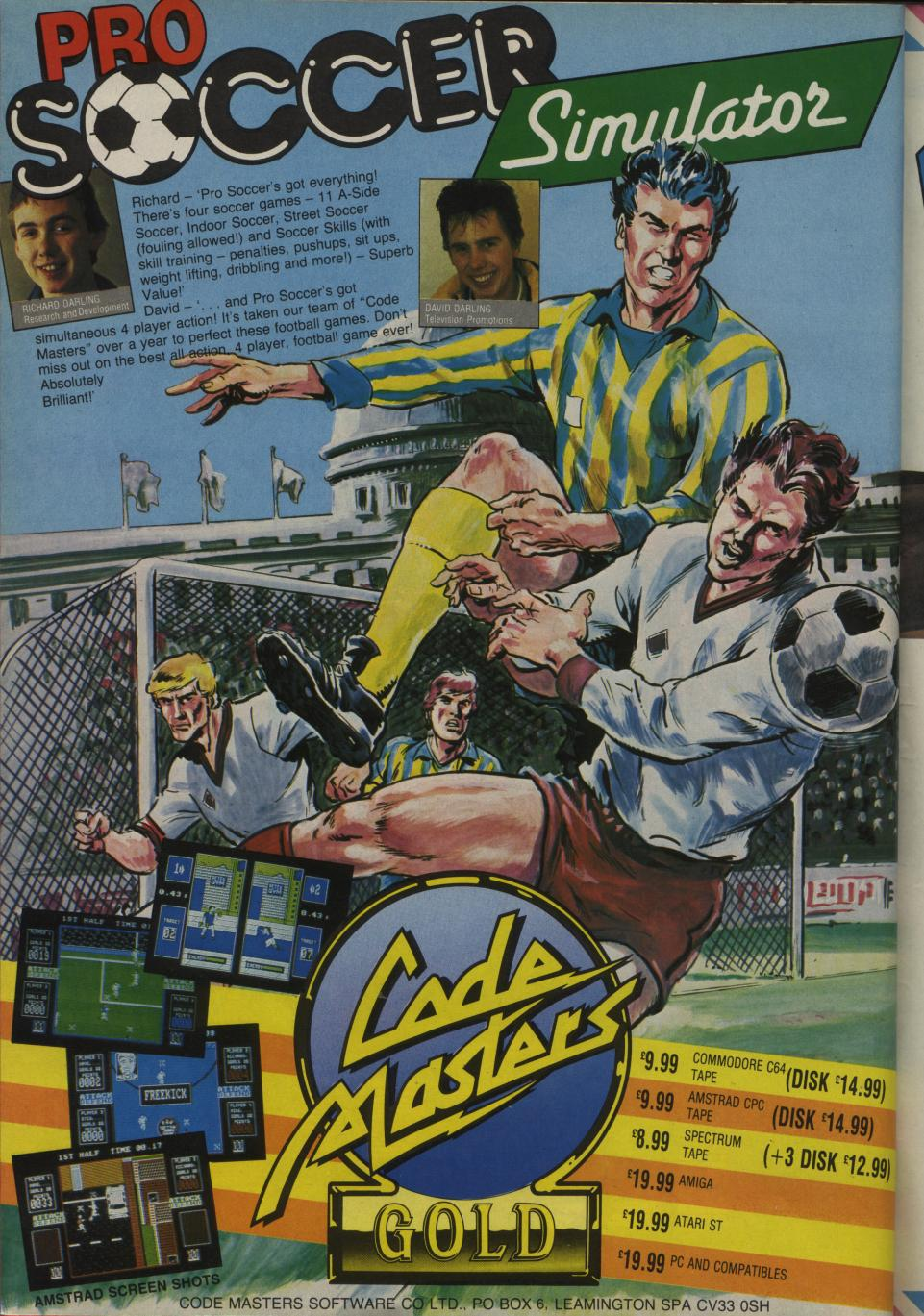
Robert Harris' work on the programme has been so successful that he's now set up his own mobile computer graphics studio – The Travelling Matte Company. In a Mercedes truck fully equipped with Supernova, Sony 3000 rostrum mounted video camera and Sony Video Printer, he travels the country dealing with, among other things, corporate conference work for a variety of large companies.

However, it's in TV and fantasy projects that the real scope for innovation lies. In a situation where you can create your own backgrounds and aren't restricted by a specific budget, the only thing you're limited by is imagination. Knightmare is only the beginning – who knows what fearsome and fantastical productions the future may hold.

► The machinery behind the *Knightmare*




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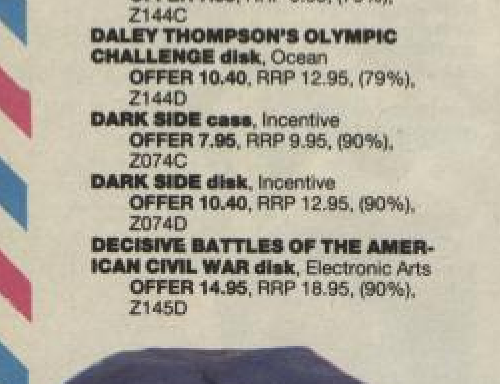
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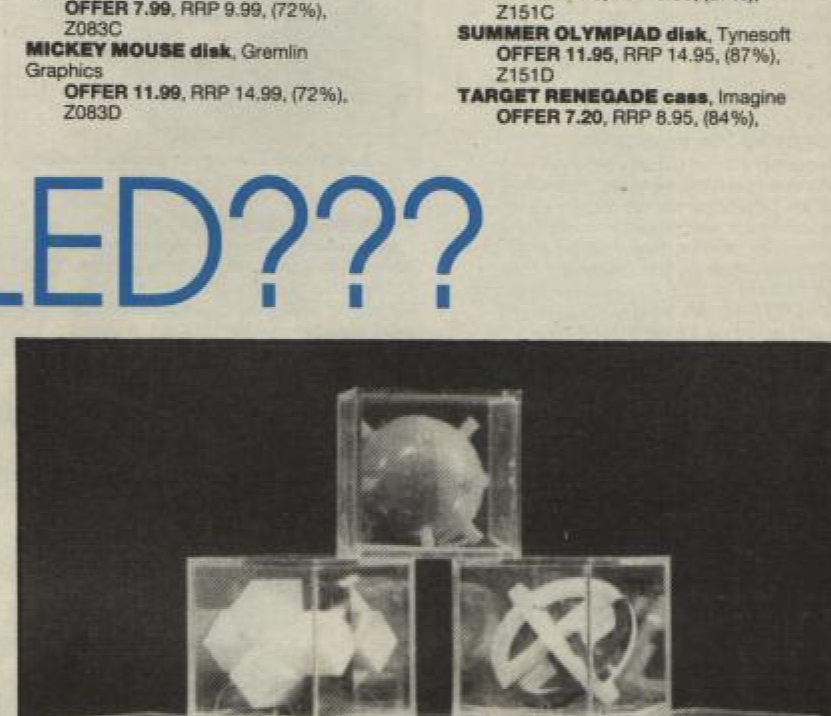
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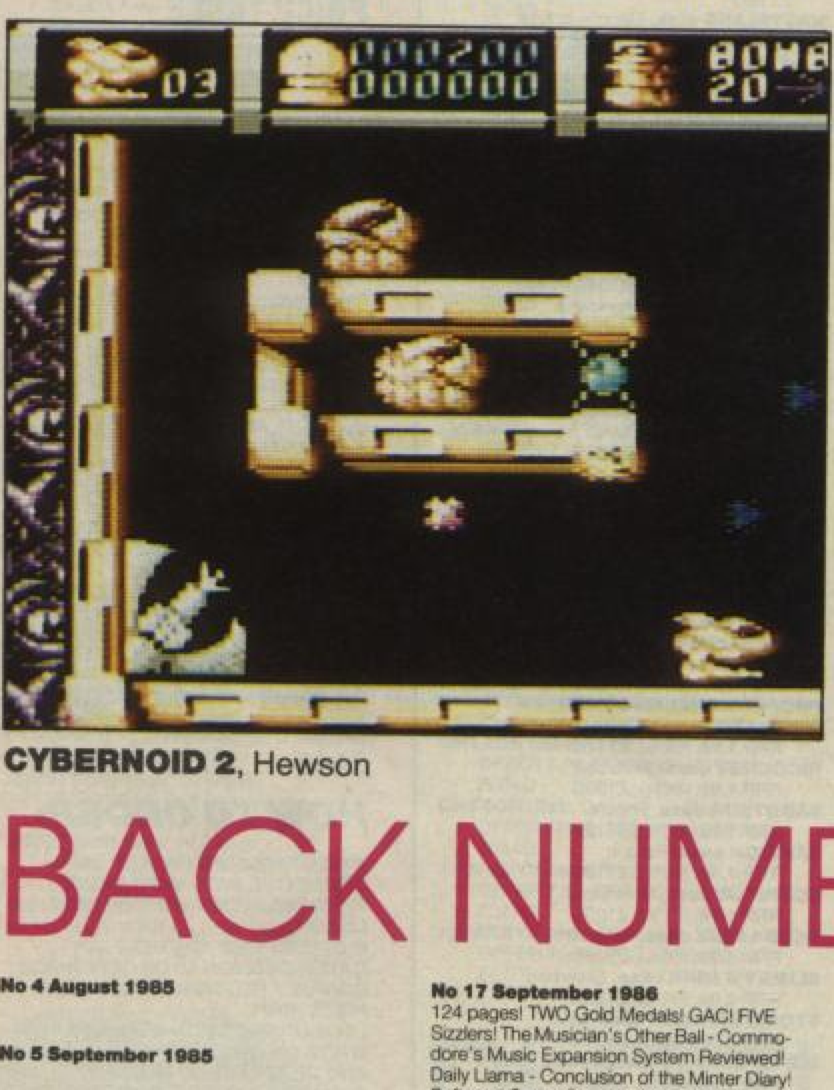
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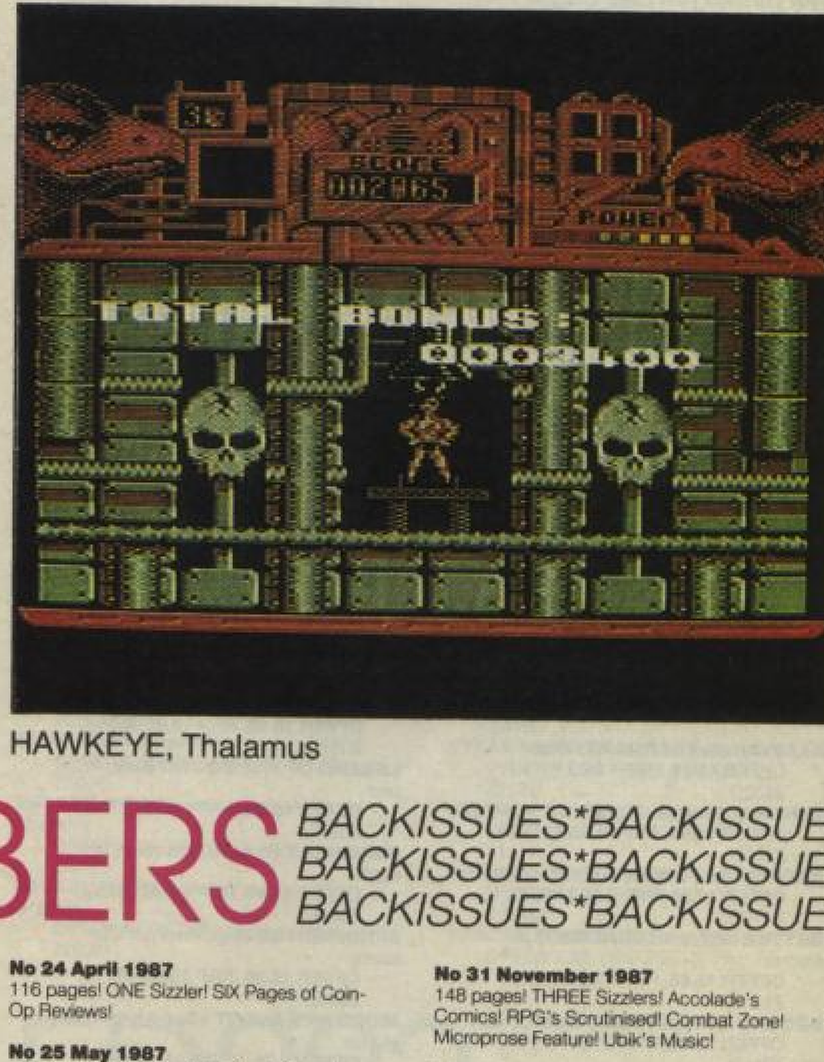
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ZZAPBACK

Two years ago Gordon was thin (well OK, he looked like a lean hippopotamus on a diet instead of two on a chocolate binge) and Paul was a carefree, madcap schoolboy in stripy socks and short trousers. Both of them scrimped, saved, borrowed, washed dishes and stole to get hold of Issue 18 of ZZAP!. Courtesy of that very same bully-boy and his diminutive tea-pixie truncheon, the best of Issue 18 is back. See what mannountain and molehill make of that . . .



GAMES ZZAPBACKED

- BEYOND THE FORBIDDEN FOREST
- IRIDIS ALPHA
- PARALLAX
- POWERPLAY
- SUPER CYCLE

POWERPLAY
Arcana

The ZZAP! lads, you might think – a dead thick lot. And you'd be absolutely right . . . oops, sorry . . . *wrong.* They couldn't stop playing *Powerplay*; for a start. Jazza called it 'fast, uncluttered, action-packed', Gazza confessed he was normally bored senseless by trivia games but found this one 'highly enjoyable' and ever-Eddy picky Rickie summed up the unanimously intellectual mood: 'the best trivia game on the market . . . it sets a high standard which others will have a hard job to beat.'

This kicks sand in the face of the official *Trivial Pursuit* licence. It's easily the best adaptation of the question-and-answer format I've seen, with a construction kit which allows you to define your own questions on separate files. Having no brain myself, I can heartily recommend it to bargain bucket freaks.
GH

An imaginative variation on the *Trivial Pursuit* theme which still provides a few hours entertainment for any group of trivia fans – including your second cousin and his goldfish. The combination of boardgame elements with the basic question-and-answer theme, enhanced by one or two nifty tunes, makes the whole package a pleasure to play.
PG

(Gordon) The lack of a restart facility would knock down Presentation a tad, otherwise the rest of the minor ratings are fine. Overall, I'd say it would sizzle even in these days of incredibly stupid ZZAP! reviewers.

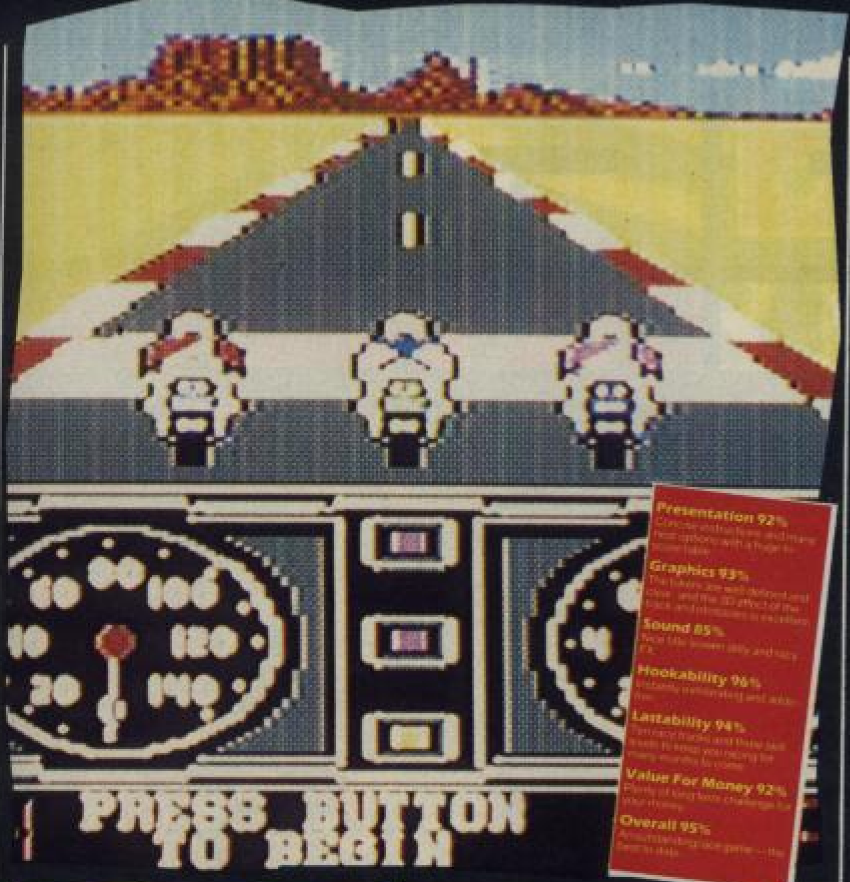
(Paul) Hookability and sound are about right but graphics need to come down just a bit. Presentation and lastability should come down about 5% as should the overall mark. Apart from that – same as it ever was.



IRIDIS ALPHA
Llamasoft/Hewson

As one of the few Jeff Minter productions which didn't feature floating camels, bouncing bunny rabbits or languid llamas, *Iridis Alpha* still seemed pretty off-beat. Jazza (not Gazza) revelled in it. He liked the Bleurgh Faces and the Star Gate refugees and declared it, quite simply, 'the best shoot 'em up on the 64'. Gazza (not Jazza) was in total agreement: 'a must for all shoot 'em up fanatics'. Heady Eddy was a bijou tadette less enthusiastic; for armchair addicts like himself the action was a bit 'OTT' but he did admit to having enjoyed 'an excellent game'.

Weird city. Even though I still haven't got a bloody clue what's going on (and I've been playing it for a couple of years now), I think



SUPER CYCLE

US Gold/Epyx

There aren't many mud tracks suited to burning rubber down in sleepy Ludlow so when the ZZAP! lads got hold of a copy of *Super Cycle*, they couldn't wait to get in the hot seat. Paul Sumner, the man with the ghoulish grin, rushed in first – only to come away 'feeling a physical wreck'. Gaz, who'd been in training on *Pitstop II*, stopped just long enough to call it 'highly addictive and challenging' while Rickie, our resident rip-up-the-road racer, got very excited about having a purple bike and a pink and lime green leather jacket. Latest news from the hospital is that he's doing fine . . .

I don't know why, but I didn't find this all that appealing. It's fast and incredibly smooth and addictive . . . for a while; but it lacks the competitive element of, say, *Pitstop II*, and the fun of *Buggy Boy*. It's good, but there's something missing. Oh – and I thought it was a little too easy.
GH

Definitely one of the classics of the 64 racing scene. Although I don't rate it quite as highly as my all-time favourite racing game, *Buggy Boy*, *Super Cycle*'s exhilarating sense of action and speed always leaves me breathless. Phew!
PG

(Gordon) Most of the ratings would get high 80s from me.

(Paul) All the ratings down about 5% – except for sound which should go down to 70%. Revving engines are all too common nowadays.

BEYOND THE FORBIDDEN FOREST

US Gold

Everybody was impressed with the gruesomely gory, ghastly and gruelling atmosphere of the sequel to *Forbidden Forest*. Gazza Penn praised it as 'intense' and 'prevailing' and waxed lyrical on the special effects. Paul 'how-do-you-like-my-toupé?' Sumner called it one of the best games he'd every played and Richard Ready Eddy was so overwhelmed by the experience that it had him 'screaming for mercy' as a dragonfly drained him of all his blood. Following an emergency blood transfusion at the Ludlow General, he made it back just in time to agree (albeit weakly) with the rest of the team: 'a worthy follow-up to a classic game'.

Talk about chunky! All right, let's not. Ignore the graphics, the rest of the game is fab. Don't play it late at night, and don't play it alone, or you might find a need to stick your trousers in the washing machine. A hot candidate for rerelease, methinks.
GH

The Yorkie bar graphics (chunky) and the jerky parallax scrolling have dated a bit but the gameplay is just as compelling as it was then. Personally, I find all that blood and gore a bit much for my delicate constitution but those blessed with a slightly stronger disposition should still find plenty to entertain.
PG

(Gordon) Presentation, graphics and hookability down by 10% each. The rest of the ratings are fine, though I'd be tempted to give it 80% overall at a ten quid price tag.

(Paul) Graphics and presentation (really tedious multiload) down by about 10% each. Sound, hookability and lastability down by 5%. I'd give it about 82% overall.



PARALLAX

Ocean

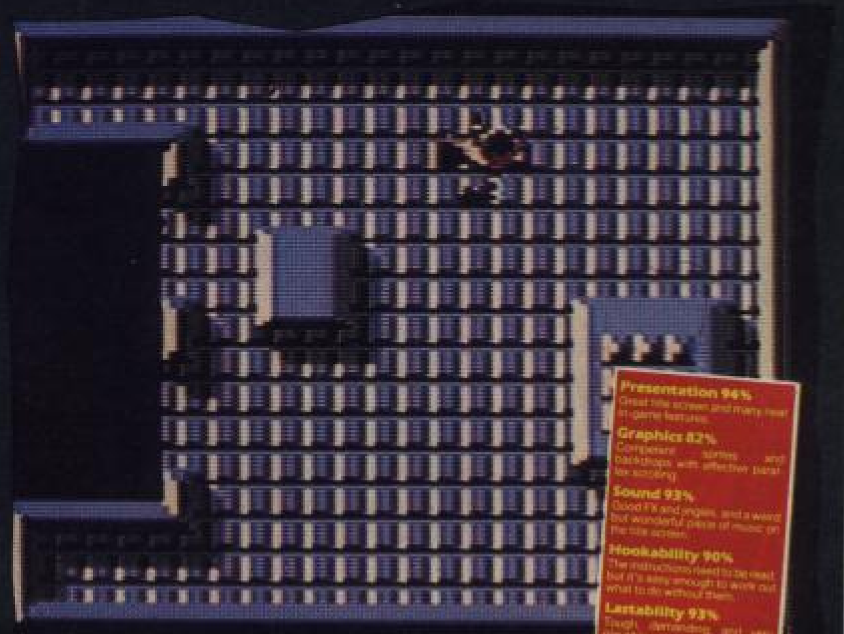
'Neat stuff' ejaculated Jaz, when he clapped eyes on this shoot 'em up cum arcade adventure cum puzzle game from Sensible Software's cuddly Chris and jovial Jops. Gazza's expletives were a bit more controlled: 'I can thoroughly recommend it to anyone who likes a shoot 'em up with a bit more 'up''. Teddy Edward made the decision unanimous and summed up everybody's enthusiasm: 'a real dream to watch and very exciting to play'.

We're now talking about one of my favourite shoot 'em ups EVER! The graphics aren't fantastic but the music is brilliant, and the puzzle elements round it off perfectly. Fly around blasting or solve the code required to access the next level – it's all up to you. It puts most modern shoot 'em up clones to shame.
GH

The *Parallax* title tune is one of my favourite pieces of computer music – it makes me want to get down and jive with the nearest bag of flavour-flooding perforations. The gameplay itself is just as compelling as it ever was, though it's better if you put the teabag down.
PG

(Gordon) All the ratings are fine, except for overall, which I'd top up to 94%

(Paul) Presentation and hookability about the same, graphics down about 5%. Everything else should go down to about 90% but not a single percent less – still one of the most complex and atmospheric games around.



it's ace. Not everyone will like it, though – if you like your shmups simple, steer clear. If you like to think before you blast, seek out a copy today!
GH

With a wider appeal than most of Jeff's games, *Iridis Alpha* still looks pretty good. I wouldn't say it was the best shoot 'em up for the Commodore ever, but it is incredibly fast and, once you get used to the unusual gameplay, very addictive.
PG

(Gordon) Everything down by 10%, if only because of its lack of wide appeal.

(Paul) Sound and hookability both down to about 70%, but graphics, lastability, value for money and overall down by a lesser degree – say, to mid 80s. It's still a game well worth looking up.

LOGON



with JASON GOLD

Ever ready for new experience, Jason RELAXES with a *Reptillia*n and watches a spot of Channel 4. Following a quick skirmish with some Crazy Bats, he gets lost with Perdita, races against time with God and gets himself into such a lather he could do with some music from DAZ. Confused? I suggest you consult a psychotherapist – but before you do that, read on.



▲ Mysterious echoes of a world gone by – Mr Cursor's *Babylon 2*

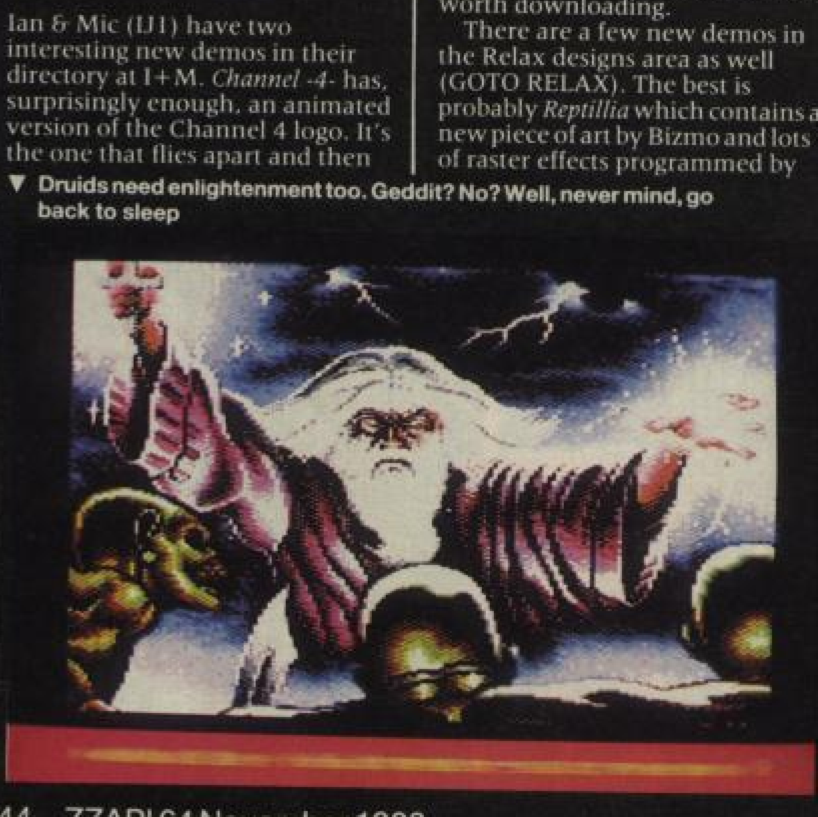
Ian & Mic (IJ1) have two interesting new demos in their directory at I+M. *Channel -4-* has, surprisingly enough, an animated version of the Channel 4 logo. It's the one that flies apart and then back together again. It makes good use of vector drawing routines and consequently the animation is very smooth. The other new demo in I+M's directory is *Interlace!* which produces an effect similar to that on an Amiga in interlace graphic mode (ie, the picture flickers!). Using this effect you can fit two full hi-res screens onto one normal screen. Careful use of colour reduces the flickering. Also in the I+M dir we have another picture by Rob Whitaker called *Who Is It?* which is up to his previous high standards and well worth downloading.

There are a few new demos in the Relax designs area as well (GOTO RELAX). The best is probably *Reptillia* which contains a new piece of art by Bizmo and lots of raster effects programmed by Kojak (DS27) and Genius (MH27).



▲ Don't ask us who it is, ask Rob Whitaker – he's the one responsible

▼ Druids need enlightenment too. Geddit? No? Well, never mind, go back to sleep



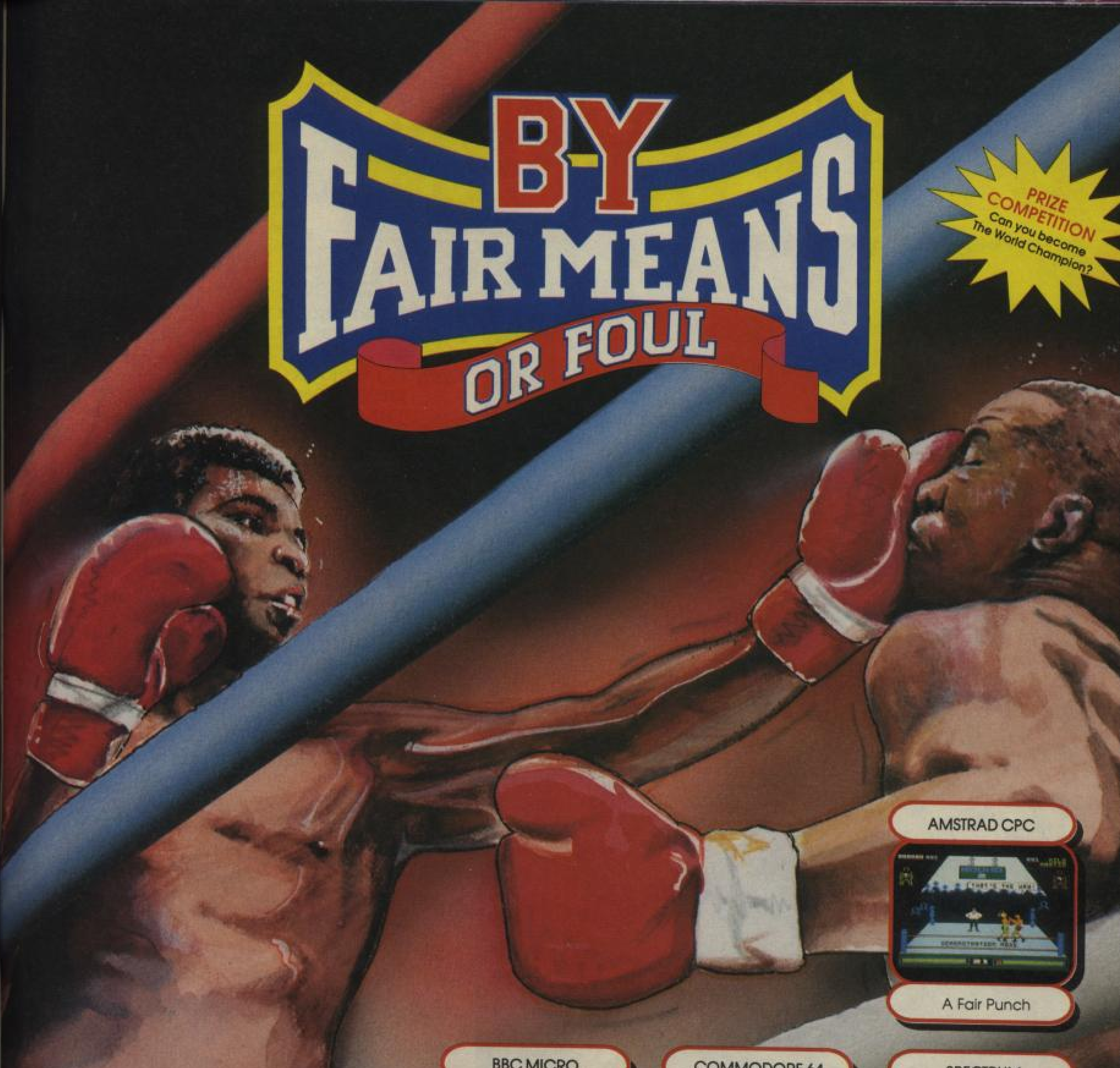
In addition to a few conventional demos, those masters of hacking, Huddy & Greeny, have *Crazy Bats* in their directory at HUDDY. It's really a two player game demo so keep your joysticks ready as this variant on the original *Pong* is fairly fast. Another demo worth a look in Huddy's dir is *Vishion!* which has some very smooth, swirling sprite effects.

Import demos continue to fill Bub's directory at BUB and the best of the bunch must be those by Mr Cursor. Babylon 2 and Babylong 2.3 are both great to look at and have good graphics and lots of effects.

Perdita (SP7) has been uploading her music onto the 'net for quite a while now and while her style may not be up there with the Hubbards of this world, it's certainly different enough to make it worth a listen. Especially as she now has *The Demo* up at 383315 which features slightly more than just the usual music and blank screen.

While on a musical theme *The Final Hour* by Mad Wolf, uploaded by DAZ at 383494 is, as the name implies, a very atmospheric piece with a nice colour effect linked to the music. There are a few samples but they don't drown out the music and work well with the rest of the tune.

Finally, God has another piece of art in his directory at 303029. *The Race Against . . .* is probably a loading screen for the Code Masters game although there are often 'alternative' versions of loading screens uploading onto the 'net. There's a piece of suitable music to accompany the picture and some unusual use of colour: it makes this picture a cut above the rest.



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THE ZZAP! READERS CHARTS



GAMES TOP 20

1	*(1)*	**BUBBLE BOBBLE**	*Firebird*
2	*(3)*	**IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II**	*US Gold/Epyx*
3	*(2)*	**BUGGY BOY**	*Elite*
4	*(NE)*	**CALIFORNIA GAMES**	*Epyx*
5	*(9)*	**BIONIC COMMANDO**	*GO!*
6	*(4)*	**THE GREAT GIANNA SISTERS**	*GO!*
7	*(6)*	**PROJECT STEALTH FIGHTER**	*Microprose*
8	*(11)*	**PLATOON**	*Ocean*
9	*(10)*	**THE LAST NINJA**	*System 3*
10	*(7)*	**IKARI WARIORS**	*Elite*
11	*(5)*	**SHOOT 'EM UP CONSTRUC. KIT**	*Outlaw*
12	*(8)*	**TARGET RENEGADE**	*Imagine*
13	*(NE)*	**WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD**	*US Gold*
14	*(14)*	**IO**	*Firebird*
15	*(13)*	**HAWKEYE**	*Thalamus*
16	*(18)*	**PAC-LAND**	*Grandslam*
17	*(16)*	**HUNTER'S MOON**	*Thalamus*
18	*(15)*	**DEFENDER OF THE CROWN**	*Mirrorsoft*
19	*(19)*	**SKATE OR DIE**	*Electronic Arts*
20	*(12)*	**CYBERNOID**	*Hewson*

MUSIC TOP 10

1	*(2)*	**DELTA**	*Rob Hubbard*
2	*(1)*	**SKATE OR DIE**	*Rob Hubbard*
3	*(3)*	**WIZBALL**	*Martin Galway*
4	*(10)*	**ARCADE CLASSICS**	*Rob Hubbard*
5	*(4)*	**PARALLAX**	*Martin Galway*
6	*(8)*	**TETRIS**	*Hagar*
7	*(7)*	**BMX KIDZ**	*Rob Hubbard*
8	*(9)*	**I,BALL**	*Rob Hubbard*
9	*(NE)*	**INTERNAT. KARATE+**	*Rob Hubbard*
10	*(6)*	**COMBAT SCHOOL**	*Martin Galway*

COIN-OP TOP 10

1	*(3)*	**DOUBLE DRAGON**	*Taito*
2	*(4)*	**AFTERBURNER**	*Sega*
3	*(NE)*	**OPERATION WOLF**	*Taito*
4	*(9)*	**ROAD BLASTERS**	*Atari*
5	*(1)*	**VULCAN VENTURE**	*Konami*
6	*(2)*	**BLASTEROIDS**	*Atari*
7	*(6)*	**BUBBLE BOBBLE**	*Taito*
8	*(8)*	**PAC-MANIA**	*Atari*
9	*(7)*	**R-TYPE**	*Irem*
10	*(5)*	**CONTINENTAL CIRCUS**	*Taito*

VIDEO TOP 10

1	*(RE)*	**ALIENS**
2	*(9)*	**BEVERLY HILLS COP II**
3	*(2)*	**ROXANNE**
4	*(1)*	**BLADE RUNNER**
5	*(6)*	**PLATOON**
6	*(5)*	**HELLRAISER**
7	*(RE)*	**FERRIS BUELLER'S DAY OFF**
8	*(4)*	**THE FLY**
9	*(3)*	**RADIO DAYS**
10	*(10)*	**CROCODILE DUNDEE**

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5: ....

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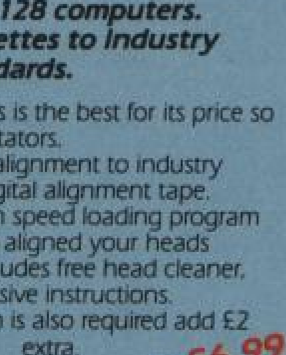
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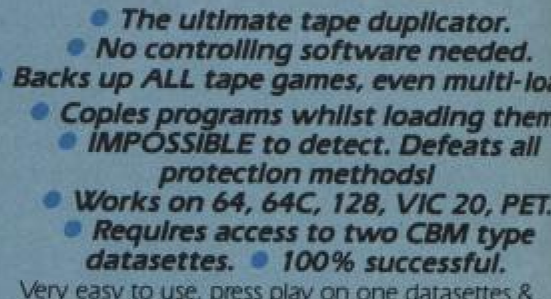
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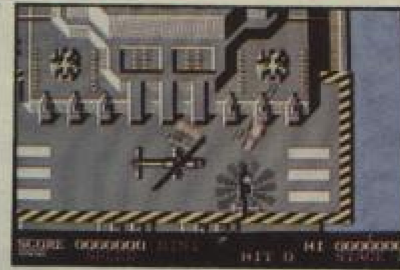
Right then! This month in *Coming Soon To A Commodore Near You* (or ordinary TV if you haven't got a monitor, or even an out-of-the-ordinary TV if that's the kind of person you are) we have *some games!* Ha! We bet that came as a shock! Anyway enough of this irrelevant rubbish – on with the previews . .

If you've paid a visit to your local arcade recently, you'll probably have noticed a strange looking thing with a chair perched at the top; some of you may have even played it, but for those that haven't got a clue what we're talking about, it's a helicopter flying game called *Thunderblade* – and US Gold have purchased the rights from Sega to convert it to the 64. The game commences with a vertically scrolling section, requiring you to fly along and blast enemy targets, giving you a chance to get to grips with the controls.

Next, the view changes to a 3D first-person perspective, keeping the vicious enemies, but adding scenery for you to dodge, thus complicating things slightly. Chris Butler is undertaking the conversion, so let's hope the action improves upon his last 3D effort, *Space Harrier*. Well, you'll get a chance to find out pretty

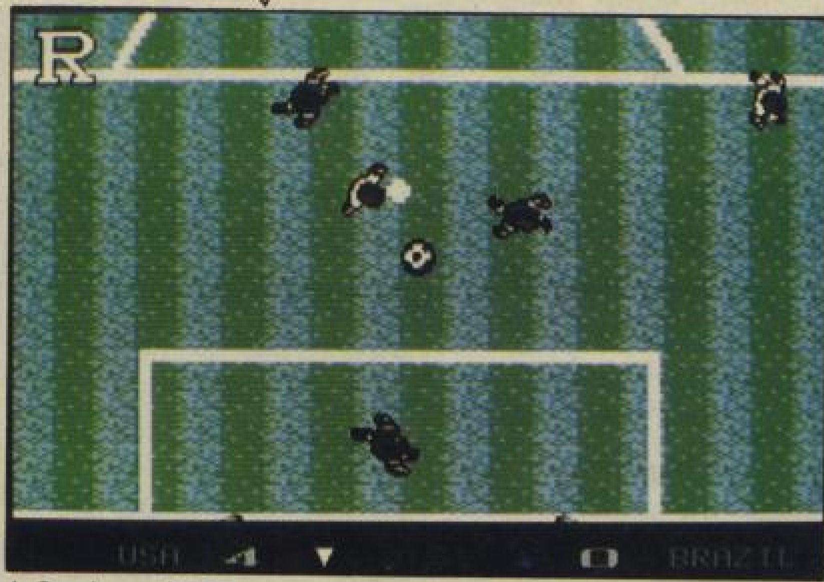
▼ Cor! US Gold's *Thunderblade* in the raw. Plenty more changes in the bag before we get the finished copy, though.





soon . . . (hint, hint) – you lucky, lucky people! By the way, there's a chair on the top because it's supposed to be like flying a helicopter, but that might be a bit obvious . . . or maybe not. *Next . . . !*

Here we are at last! News of Sensible Software's soccer game! Wooh! Hey! Wow! (Humungous applause all round). Taking an overhead view of the game of football, Sensisoft have added *loads* of extra stuff to the game. For a kick-off (sic), you can play in an International competition, with seeding levels for the teams, so picking Brazil to be your team



▲ *Sensisoccer*'s TV-style action replay lets everyone laugh at your worst moves – all over again

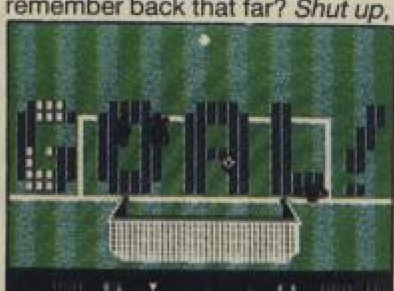
automatically means that the other teams aren't as good as you. Clever, eh? Also available is the chance to play in a full World Cup Tournament, allowing up to 16 human players to take part, as well as a two player friendly option, so any two players from a bank of names can have a game. Extra



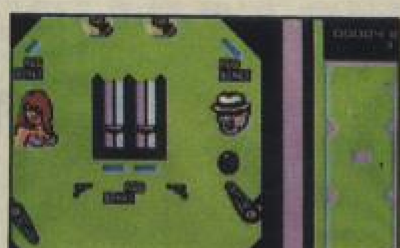
▲ . . . (giggle, giggle) a dead serious soccer sim (hrmph, giggle, giggle) – honest

presentation points appear in the form of banana shots and even rain-storms which make the pitch slippery. *And*, as if that wasn't enough, the generous so-and-sos have included six-a-side indoor soccer at no extra cost! Good, eh? Well, we think so, as opinion amongst the members of the ZZAP! office is that *Micro Soccer* (as it is now called) is 'dead great'. But, the bad news is that no release details are known as yet, so we'll just have to wait it out (boo!).

Also from US Gold ('also' because we've already told you about *Thunderblade* – can't you remember back that far? *Shut up,*

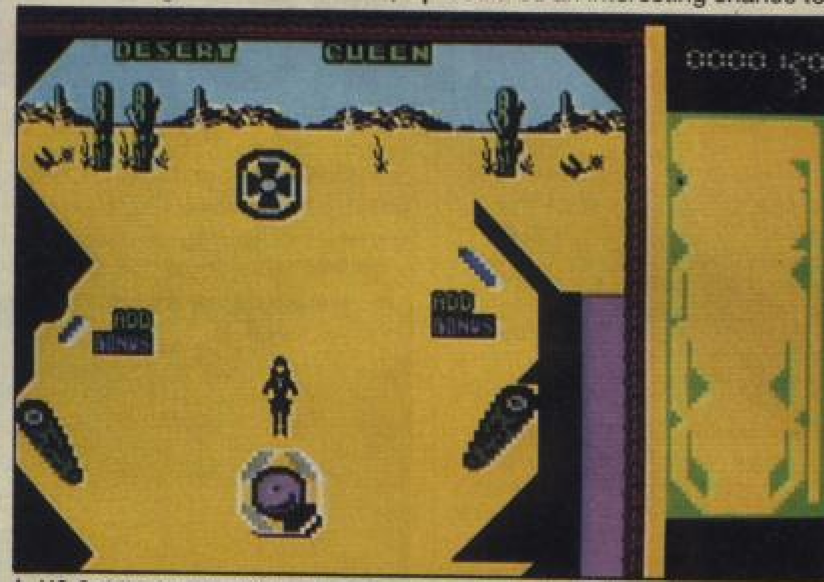


Maff – Ed. Oh, alright), comes a pinball simulation entitled *Arcade Wizzard*. The action takes place across a series of tables (pinball tables that is), each of which can only be played when a certain qualifying score has been reached. Play starts on table one, and if 10,000 is reached, then you



can play table two, then table three and so on. In the version that we've seen, there are a few strange quirks, such as an old piece of music and an . . . er . . . 'unusual' control method (well *I* think it's very unusual. Some of the graphics on the preview version are rather hard on the eyes, but we'll have to wait for the finished product until we know for sure what the game is going to be like – so keep your eyes peeled (don't you think that sounds rather disgusting? Well I do. In fact I've always thought it's a bit odd, right from . . . (*Shut up Maff!*) Oh, alright).

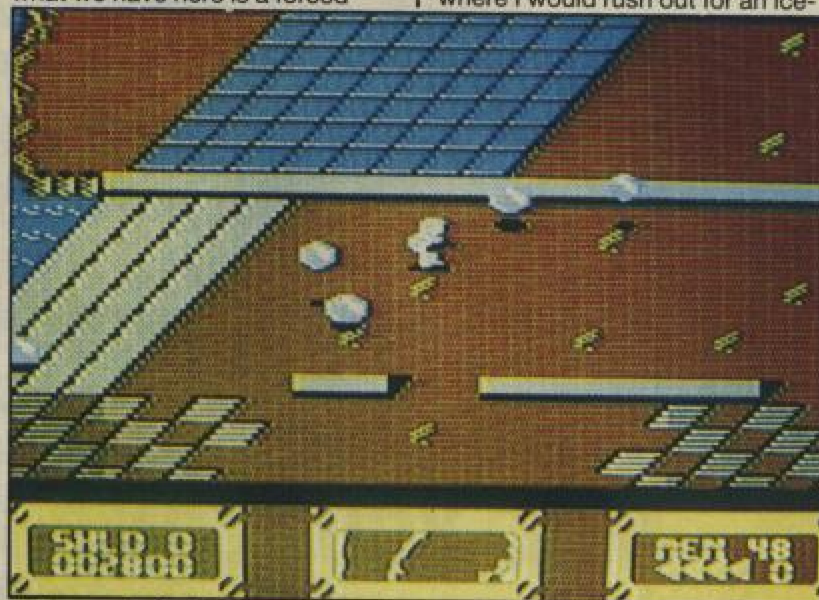
Last, but not least, well it might be, but then again it might not, on the other hand (*look – for the last time, SHUT UP MAFF!*). OK, then. Well, anyway, the last game for preview is from Novagen, home label to such games as *Encounter*,



▲ US Gold's *Arcade Wizzard* – a strong contender for this year's most garish graphics award?

Backlash and the classic *Mercenary*. The new game is in a completely different style from the usual Novagen format, being a break from the first person perspective games for which they're better known. Instead, what we have here is a forced perspective arcade adventure set on an island, featuring search and survival tactics. In other words, battles. For this reason the game is called *Battle Island*. (You see you're on an island and you take part in battles, so . . . oh, never mind). However, there are various nasty creatures also on the island who, for some reason, *don't* want you to survive. Cruel, eh? This could be an interesting chance to see how Novagen cope outside the first-person, 3D environment. Let's hope it lives up to their perspective games.

Well, that's it for this month's previews. Now if this was the cinema, this would be the point where I would rush out for an ice-cream, but this isn't the cinema, so I won't get an ice-cream. Well . . . maybe a small one. Anyone got 30p to lend me? No? Oh, well, suit yourself . . .



▲ Novagen's *Battle Island* depicting life on the ocean waves – well, life next to them anyway

▼ Aargh! Keep away from those flying blobs – you'll be sorry if you don't . . .



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20 ALL-TIME COMPUTER WONDERS AND BLUNDERS

We look up the classics and eternal bummers which have graced the Commodore scene since time immemorial.

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